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GURUNGS, GOORKHALIS, GURKHAS: SPECULATIONS ON A NEPALESE ETHNO-HISTORY

Tod A. Ragsdale

Gurungs

The Gurungs are a Tibeto-Burman people who have for centuries inhabited the southern slopes of the Himalaya in Central Nepal. Outside Nepal they have gained recognition-along with Magar, Limbu and Rai peoples-as tough soldiers in Gurkha regiments of the Indian and British armies.¹ Their homeland is a contact zone between Indian Hinduism and Tibetan Buddhism, and both these have overlaid an ancient shamanistic religion, to become part of Gurung culture.

The Gurung economy is diverse. Military service and sedentary agriculture (including wet rice cultivation and various dry crops such as maize and millet) have become the main pillars of their economy, replacing once exclusive reliance on highland herding, hunting and swidden agriculture. Long distance trade has always played a major part in the Gurung economy. Though their role as middle men in Nepal's Tibet trade is no longer prominent, new avenues have opened through military service outside Nepal.

Gurungs are found in Kaski, Parbat, Syangja, Lamjung, Tanahu, Manang, and Gorkha districts. Secondary centers of Gurung concentration are in Kathmandu Valley and the Nepal's far east. The map on page --- indicates Gurung distribution nationally by district. Within their historic homeland, the Gurung community may be sub-divided into Western, Central and Eastern sections, or they may be classified as highlander *Lekhalis* and lowlanders. (Messerschmidt 1974:2) Though in the "low lands", the latter are found

principally along the top of 4–5,000' ridges.

The Nepali term for Tibetan, *Bhote*, has long had pejorative connotations, and some Tibetan populations adjoining the Gurung area have taken to calling themselves "Gurung". What sets Gurungs apart from neighboring *Bhotes* appears to be not so much language or custom but a clan system that embraces the whole community, more particularly that of so called *Char Jat* Gurungs, which is universally found. Tibetans claiming to be Gurungs have been disbelieved on account of their ignorance of the Gurung clan system (Furer-Haimendorf 1977:156). Nevertheless, the Gurung language is one of the most closely related to Tibetan of all himalayan languages and some Gurung populations exist north of the Himalayan range whose dress and customs differ little from Tibetans. (Grierson 1909:182).

The distinctive structural feature of Gurung society is its dual organization into two heirarchical and endogamous strata or sub-tribes called the *Char Jat* (Nep: four clans) and the *Sora Jat* (Nep: sixteen clans). Each strata incorporates a number of named exogamous patrilineal clans which in turn are segmented into local lineages.²

Sora Jat is an inclusive term for all Gurung clans not included among the higher ranked *Char Jat*. The actual number of clans included under the term *Sora Jat* is unknown. Citations exist listing them from twenty-eight to as many as ninety-seven (Pignede 1966:178; Vansittart 1915:79-80). As many *Sora Jat* clan names are the same as Magar ones, it is possible that the *Sora Jat* includes originally non-Gurung lineages who for one reason or another became subordinate to the Gurung *Char Jat*.

The *Char Jat* is an accurate term reflecting the existence of four pan-tribal categories called "Jat" or, in English, "Caste". The *Char Jat* as a whole is endogamous, while each of the four categories is exogamous. Within each category are several patrilineal clans sometimes indentifying a common ancestor but not necessarily doing so. The *Char Jat* categories are named as though they were governmental positions in a Tibetan polity, viz, their Nepali names: 1) *Ghale*, "King; 2) *Ghodane*, "Minister"; 3) *Lama*, "Priest"; and 4) *lamichane*, "Councillor".³

In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, previous to the consolidation of *Khas* principalities, Gurung states existed in which locally powerful lineages assumed Tibetan titles. Or, possibly, later Tibetan immigrants imposed political organization upon already established tribes, in the same

way as Rajput did over Khas later on in the consolidation of Indo-Nepalese political units.

The Origin of Gurungs

Lamnasa's Gurungs:

Pressed on the question of their origins, Gurung elders in the village panchayat where I did research, could not go further back to origins beyond the arrival of their own eighteenth century ancestors to the at that time forested lowland region nearby Pokhara Valley.

This village panchayat, I call *Lamnasa* elsewhere, in 1974 had 1,286 Gurungs -- 1076 Char Jat and 210 Sorah Jat (Ragsdale, 1989). Among the Char Jat Gurungs were *Lama*, *Ghotane*, *Lamichane*, in that order numerically. *Ghale* Gurungs were represented only by an old couple running a small tea shop well below the main settlements. It was possible to distinguish some twenty-two separate lineages within these categories. Each lineage could trace a migration to Lamnasa Village Panchayat from some other part of Kaski or from Lamjung district to the East. Most came from highland villages of greater antiquity sometime during the late eighteenth century or after. Gurungs would say that they brought low-caste Hindu artisan families along with them to provide services in the new settlements, and upon questioning the artisans agreed with this account.

The late eighteenth century was a time of political instability at the local level, and forests were protected by sovereign edict, on account of the cover they provided for the strategic hill forts established by the ruling lineages.⁴ Two such fortresses were established on two of the highest ridges, some distance above present settlements, and their ruins can still be seen. Villages lower down were established by different lineages as small forest settlements. Gurungs say that before they arrived in the area, only a few Indo-Nepali families who, it is said, had no fixed settlements, were in the forests.

Two brothers from the presently most influential lineage (*Pange-Lamas*) came from neighboring Lamjung to Kaski District, where Lamnasa is located, and established a fort about 1790. At the time Pokhara, Kaski's premier town, was the military centre for Nepal's westward expansion. Two kinsmen of the *Pange-Lama* Lineage gained special prominence in this campaign--Natu and prahlad of Riban village, north of Pokhara⁵ -- and it was through their influence as military officers that others of their lineage were strategically placed throughout Kaski and western Lamjung. Their influence

gave officers such as Natu and Prahlad the right to assign unclaimed forest land to military personnel for conversion to paddy lands. Their close kinsmen, in turn, were charged with attracting settlers and further allotting lands and homesteads to fellow Gurungs lower in military rank (Regmi 1965:20-25).

Official Explanation of Gurung Origins:

To explain their origins earlier than their arrival in Lamnasa, Gurungs would tend to rely on dynastic chronologies called *Gurung Vamsavali*.⁶ Different versions of these vamsavali exist, and parallel stories are absorbed into the folklore of Lamjung. (Messerschmidt 1974:21-23), but the authorship appears to originate with a seventeenth century Brahmin advisor to the Shah king of Kaski (Messerschmidt 1974:17). These documents are in the Sanskritic tradition of Nepal's Hindu ruling classes, and they explain that the ancestors of *Char Jat* Gurungs included a Chetri prince and a Brahmin priest, both of whom lost their caste standing through an unfortunate incidence, involving the ingestion of alcohol, that led to their ritual pollution. *Sorah Jat* Gurungs, according to these sources, descended from a servant accompanying their overlords on the journey in which the incident occurred.

The Vamsavali chronicals explained that the title "Gurung" evolved from one ancestor's ability to meditate. Because of this ability, and his status as a teacher, he was called "Guru", or "Gurung", and this became a title for all *Char Jat* Gurungs when the first Shah king of Lamjung deposed the Gurung dynasty of that principality about 1500 and rewarded those Gurung families who had sided with him with powers of local administration (Messerschmidt 1974:13-20). This Brahmanical construction rationalized Gurung history and social structure to fit caste-hierarchical norms, and it was used in the nineteenth century by Rana Prime ministers to adjudicate social conflict between the *Char Jat* and The *Sorah Jat* Gurungs (Messerschmidt 1974:19; Vansittart 1915:77).

Gurung clans who benefited most from the shah kings' assumption of power, and later from appointments made by the Rana prime ministers, seem to have found it convenient to take the *Gurung Vamsavali* at face value. Those who did adopt these explanations of the Gurung origins adopted dress and commensal rules more in keeping with the new Hindu ruling classes.

Records of former Gurung states in the Lamjung and Kaski areas were suppressed and finally eradicated over a period of several hundred years. These

measures are documented in eastern Nepal, where during the nineteenth century Limbus were forbidden to keep the dynastic chronologies of their Limbu kings, and these chronicles were destroyed whenever found by officials (Grierson, 1909:283).

A Tibetan past:

Despite these official explanations of the Gurung past, most Gurungs recognized affinities with Tibet. One elder, for instance, explained to me that Gurungs had once been Tibetan but had given up eating beef when serving as soldiers in the armies of the Shah kings. Thus, according to this source, they had earned the appellation of *Go-Rom*, Sanskrit for "cow's hide".⁷

Gurung do use "Gurung" to refer to themselves when they speak Nepali. However in their own Tibeto-Burman language, *Tamu-kwi*, they refer to themselves as *Tamu* or *Tamme*. At first glance, this gives little clue of the Gurung past, except as Dr. Harka Gurung has suggested, in an informal communication, that it could be a term meaning "highlander".⁸

Iman Sing Chemjong, a Limbu historian and proponent of Limbu ethnicity, presents Nepalese history from a Tibeto-Burman perspective. He gives an account of Gurung origins from this Tibeto-Burman perspective (Chemjong, 1967). Chemjong's account of Gurung history is based on Limbu chronicles that, unlike documentation from Gurung kingdoms, somehow escaped destruction, and are, according to Chemjong, in the Brian Hodgson collection at the India Office Library in London.⁹

Chemjong dates the Gurung arrival in the Gandaki region (Kaski and Lamjung) in mid-western Nepal in the seventh century, when Tibet's first historical king, Songtsen Gampo, was forming a great central Asian empire that at the time threatened China. Songtsen Gampo occupied "Nepal", or Kathmandu Valley, and engaged cavalry as far south as the Indian plains.¹⁰

A diaspora of Tibeto-Burman tribes occurred during the seventh century, when swift cavalry were able to knit together an empire of great proportions within a matter of a hundred years, and Nepal was the scene of Tibetan military engagements several times, until the fragmentation of the Tibetan empire during the ninth century (Stein, 1972:58-59, 64).

Chemjong's account has the Gurungs in a long migration from northern Tibet, eastward through the Sino-Tibetan frontier region, southward along the river systems of the Mekong, Salween and Yangtze, through the

Chinese province of Yunnan, westward across Burma to follow the course of the Tsangpo River, finally to where the Tsangpo meets the Kali Gandaki River, which cuts a deep gorge southwards through the Himalayas into Nepal's Gandaki region, the present Gurung homeland.

According to Chemjong, the Gurungs are one of the "seven tribes" of northern Tibet. They appear in central Nepal as mercenary troops (already having the name "Gyarung") under Shah leaders from Yunnan. Nine *Gyarung* officers established a federation of small village-centered states in the Gandaki region, thereafter named *Gya-Rong*, or "nine chiefs" ¹¹

This account is, of course, purely hypothetical. Nevertheless, the account presented by Chemjong of the Gurung migration from northern Tibet, along the Sino-Tibetan border regions, and ultimately across southern Tibet to central Nepal seems corroborated by other histories. Songtsen Gampo, Tibet's first historic king, first established control from his capital over the nomadic and semi-nomadic tribes in the north, around the giant lake of Koko Nor. (Stein, 1972). He wished to do so because these tribes bred excellent horses and were known for the quality of their iron swords and iron and leather breastplates. Subsequently these tribes became the cavalry vanguard for Tibet's expansion, and many of them were shifted eastward to guard the Chinese frontier (Stein, 1972).

This shift in the seventh century of tribal people from the Koko Nor area to eastern Tibet coincided with the establishment of group of small states in the Sino-Tibetan frontier area called the *Gya-Rong* principalities. These states were founded in an area contiguous with the Tatu River, at what has remained to this day the easternmost boundary of Tibetan ethnicity. ¹²

The Sino-Tibetan frontier has over the centuries sent waves of migration into Yunnan and northern Burma. Its Many states have never been absorbed, until recently, into either Tibet or China, but have been hotly contested for by both (Aung, 1967:3-4). The migrations have followed trade routes from time immemorial along the three giant rivers whose intervening mountain ranges have, on the other hand, obstructed easy communication between China and Tibet.

In the seventh century, and at different times during the eighth century, Tibet controlled or had suzerainty over Nan Chao, the emergent kingdom of the *Tai-Shan* people (Stein, 1972:60). It is thought that one of the five wives Songtsen Gampo married to ally Tibet to its neighbors was

from Nan-Chao, a seventh century state situated on the plateau that Yunnan and Burma's Shah State today share. Nan-Chao's Shah rulers used Tibeto-Burman mercenaries from the north to assert their hegemony in the region.¹³ Some of these, who settled the highland region of northern Burma, eventually saw service as British mercenaries -- in the same way as have Nepal's northern border as mercenaries of the Shah, who in turn are the Limbus of eastern Nepal.

A Tibetan Origin, Other Considerations:

Although Tibet is seen generally as a wild, snowy, inhospitable country, its latitude is the same as Algeria's, and it contains a host of micro-climates based on the lay of valleys, directional trend of mountain ranges, the particular altitude of a given place, and the amount of annual rainfall. Within the same geographic area one can find communities adapted to a number of ecological zones -- much as in Nepal. In folklore and in spoken language the idea of a 'country' or of a 'district' is expressed by the word for 'valley'. Stein uses the Tibetan work '*lung-pa*' to illustrate this (stein, 1972:22). This word denotes a valley, without implying the features of a 'gorge' or 'defile', as defined by the word *ron* (*rong*) (Thomas, 1948:5). Northeastern Tibet (the Sino-Tibetan frontier, now within China's Kansu, Tsinghai, Sechzwan, and Yunnan provinces) contains three mountain ranges of Himalayan dimensions. These are closely aligned between the Salween, Mekong, and Yangtze rivers, on their north-west to south-east routes.

The *rong* gorges or defiles among these mountains are well wooded and rather thickly populated. Fortress like houses of several stories climb the steep declivities (Thomas, 1948:7) Though rain is scanty through much of Tibet, here the monsoon penetrates along the major river far north, allowing a mixed variety of agriculture in the lower areas of *rong* valleys. The upper parts of the valleys, unsuitable for settlement, allow for nomadic pasturage. Although a few *rong* areas exist in southern Tibet, where Himalayan passes allow the monsoon passage, the northeast is *rong* country *Par excellence*. (Thomas, 1948:6).

In northeastern Tibet, *rong* regions are set among high plateau, or plains, or among wide valleys of a plains aspect. Tent dwelling nomads, the 'pasture-land people' called '*brona-pa*' stereotypically represent outsiders' notions of the regions. Proper "Tibetans" (*Bod-pa*) of fertile, agricultural regions in the south view '*brog-pa*' as almost foreign (stein, 1972:109), although Sino-Tibet has three times the population of Tibet proper (Han-Seng, 1949:73). Valley dwellers of the *rong* areas are related to the nomadic

tribes, and the transition between their ways of life is gradual, but generally travellers have described the rong populations as distinct, enjoying a more abundant economy (Grenard, 1974:366–367; Thomas, 1948:19; Duncan, 1952: 256).

The rong regions in northeastern Tibet are ecologically very much like the gorges and defiles (rong) of the south-tending Himalayan spurs of central and western Nepal, where the most ancient highland Gurung villages are located. It is not inconceivable, given the above historical and geographical coincidence that related mountain peoples, such as the *Tomi* located southwest of Lake Koko Nor in Northern Tibet, or the *rtsa-me* in the kingdom of Minyak, northeast of the giant salt lake, became eventually the *Tamme* of Nepal, whom we know as Gurung.¹⁵

These northern Tibetan tribes of the Amdo region shifted southeastward in the seventh century to different rong regions along the Sino-Tibetan frontier, such as *Gyo-Rong*, *Tao-Rong*, *Tsa-Rong*, and *Nya-Rong*.¹⁶ In *Gya Rong*, the rong inhabitants are – seemingly in correspondence with Chemjong's account of Gurung antecedents – related to a nomadic people close by called the “Seven Tribes”(Duncan, 1952:163).

Although called “Giarong”, or simply “Rong” (the Tibetan name for Lepchas of Sikkim, close cousins to Gurungs according to Chemjong's account) by outsiders, the rong dwellers of *Gya-Rong* speak of themselves as having originated in Minyak (Menya), the home of the *rtsa-mi*, known as horsebreeders and cavalry (Duncan, 1952:262; Stein, 1972:24).

The Sino-Tibetan frontier has never been so far from Nepal as it might at first appear. Trade, pilgrimage, and military defeat have brought waves of immigrants southwestward toward the northern Nepal borders.¹⁷ Most recently, the *Khampas* have come to the Kali Gandaki region of Nepal, having resisted the Chinese invasion of the 1950s (Mullin, 1975; Peissel, 1967).

More Recent Adaptations of the Gurungs:

Thakalis and Tamangs are close neighbors of the Gurungs, who share much with them both linguistically and in their ethnicity. One Tamang informant explained to me that Ta-Mang came from Tibetan *arta* “horse” and *dmag* “army”, that his ancestors had been cavalry under Songtsen Gampo in the Seventh century, when they arrived in Nepal.¹⁸ Chemjong too gives a similar account for the Tamangs.¹⁹

According to Chemjong, leaders of Tamang division established a league of village-centered states similar to those of the reputed *Gu-Rong* of the Gurungs.²⁰ It may be that because these were not taken over early by *Khas* rulers, Tamangs have retained a Tibetan identity that Gurungs no longer so closely retain. Thakalis, on the other hand, straddled a major trade route, and they became identified by name with their locality, the village of Thak. Imperatives for retaining commercial dominance caused them, much as with Gurungs, to shed their Tibetan identity. In their case this seems to have happened later than with Gurungs, but with much greater determination and suddenness. (Furer-Haimendorf, 1975:140-160).

It seems likely that at one time these three people were more closely identified as having antecedents in the seventh century cavalry of Songtsen Gampo and that their modern "tribal" identity has been the result of differing historical and geographic circumstances from the seventeenth century onwards.

Gurungs as Goorkhalis and Gurkhas:

Until Nepal's unification in the late eighteenth century, Gurungs probably led a life similar to that still led by more isolated Tibetan-speaking agropastoralist in western Nepal. While pursuing agriculture as a major activity, the villagers in the high rong valley of Limi maintain profitable herds of sheep and yak. These are kept apart from the villages by herdsmen living year round in nomadic tents. The animals are valuable, aside from their produce, for transporting salt – a major article of trade which herdsmen obtain during Winter when pasturing their herds on the *byang thang*, the grassy plains region of northern Tibet.²¹ The villages are linked by trails through Tibet, not only to such Tibetan trade centers as Purang, but to other areas of Nepal as well.

The Gurung role as middle men in this trans-Himalayan salt trade, and their involvement in trans-national pastoralism, has been documented by Messerschmidt and Haimendorf (Messerschmidt, 1976:167–185; Furer-Haimendorf, 1975). Involvement of Gurungs in the formation of the Nepalese state, beginning with the expansion of the borders of the principality of Gorkha, changed this role over time. Gurungs served in Gorkha's army, and they were attracted from more northerly, higher altitude settlements – where pastoralism and trade were important – to *jagir* land grants given them for their service to the Gorkha state. Because of their martial reputation, long after *jagir* land grants were restricted almost entirely to the higher officer classes of the Nepalese army, they continued to be

granted to rank and file Gurung soldiers of elite Kali Bahadur regiment (Regmi, 1965:23).

Probably because of their critical importance to the Nepalese army, a Gurung was included, for a time, in the council of four *Kajis* who administered Nepal during its expansionist period. By virtue of his position, he had the right to grant large *jagir* holdings to kinsmen and allies at a time when, in 1805, the army was being greatly enlarged to meet the possibility of war with British India.²²

Service in the Nepalese Army led directly to Gurungs forswearing beef and to their promising to "revere" Brahmins²³ By this they were exempted from a tax on hides from Tibet that was traditionally imposed on nomadic or seminomadic people (Stein, 1972:112). The 1805 Charter establishing these conditions symbolized a new semi-caste standing for the Gurung community within the Hindu fold. It also symbolized the government's success in winning Gurungs away from the Tibetan social and economic orbit.²⁴ This success became all the more important in that Nepal had just sustained a defeat at Chinese hands and was nominally, like Tibet, under Chinese suzerainty. (Bell 1927: 89-92, 241; shakabpa, 1967: 168).

When Gurungs and Magars in Large numbers were recruited to the Indian Army after 1816, the Nepalese government at first imposed severe penalties on those who went and resisted British pressures to legitimize the recruitment.²⁵ These "Gurkhas" were at first recruited as a simple matter of convenience. The Nepal Army that had impressed the British with its fighting ability was disbanded, and suddenly out of work soldiers were simply available. The British also believed that anti-British factions within Nepal would find a way to use these large number of unemployed soldiers returning home to resume hostilities. (Kumar, 1967: 13; Husain, 1970:41).

Gurkhas were still little more than 'irregulars' when, in 1857, they proved their loyalty to the British in the suppression of the rebellion that nearly wrested the whole of northern India from British control.²⁶ The British attitude towards Gurkhas changed dramatically, when both they and the Nepalese government remained firmly on the British side during this conflict. After 1857, the stereotyped qualities of bravery, cheerfulness, simplicity and freedom from over-zealous caste rules made the Gurkhas favored over most other groups for British recruitment into the Indian Army. Also important was that these largely illiterate yeomen from an educationally backward region of the subcontinent were not concerned with Indian politics

(Masters, 1969:71–75; Cohen, 1971:50–51; Vansittart 1915:7–8). Being in many ways as foreign to the Indian plains as the British themselves, Gurkhas could safely be used against unruly mobs or even, if need arose, against rebellious elements of the Indian Army itself (Cohen 1971:93–94, 129; Vansittart 1915:58; Gibbon, 1899:802–815, 804; Masters 1969:16–17; Muni, 1973:168).

By 1885, opposition of the Nepalese government 'illegal' recruitment into the Indian Army, "veiled under professions of co-operation" (Cohen, 1971:44) was finally overcome, and a treaty formally recognizing the hitherto clandestine recruitment of Gurkhas from Nepal was signed (Mojumdar, 1963:148). It was probably no coincidence that the Indian Congress Party began its career of opposition to British rule the same year. By 1914, Gurkhas stood at about ten percent of the Indian Army.²⁷

Pressure in the Indian Army to be at least nominally Hindu continued as it had been in the Nepalese Army. According to a British recruitment officer:

The Gurungs in their own country are really Buddhists, though they will not admit it in India. To this day their priests in their own homes are Lamas and Giabrigs, but when serving in our regiments they submit to the Brahmins and employ them for all priestly functions. They say with true philosophy. 'Jaisa des vaisa bhes' which might be translated as, 'do in Rome as the Romans do' (Vansittart, 1915:47–48).

On returning home, Gurungs had to pay a fee to "obtain back all rights and privileges of their caste" (Vansittart, 1915:50). Nepal's Raj Guru (Royal Priest) enforced strict commensal and other caste rules for Gurungs while they were in the Indian Army, rules probably unenforceable in remote Gurung villages.

An illustration of how seriously these rules were taken occurred during the attendance of Gurkha orderlies at King Edward VII's 1910–11 funeral. To attend the funeral, which required the normally forbidden trip across the "dark waters" to Britain, required special dispensation from the Nepalese court, and only eight Gurkhas were allowed to go because – according to the regimental historian, Nepal's ban on overseas voyages was getting stricter every year (Woodyat, 1929:95–96).

A Rudyard Kipling story describes how Honorary Captain Santabir Gurung performed a great personal feat in observing strict Hindu food restrictions during the funeral ceremony, but despite this reputed orthodoxy, Santabir was outcast for obscure reason by the Nepalese authorities and was unable to return home for twenty-five years while regimental representatives appealed for redress. At eighty-four Santabir Gurung was allowed to visit Nepal for purification (Kipling, 1917:219-238; Stevens, 1952:23-25; Philip Mason, 1974:379-383).

Education in the Indian Army became a potent force for assimilation of Gurungs to Hindu caste norms, and Brahmin school masters were recruited from Nepal to run battalion schools. These school masters gave basic instruction in Nepali at time when schools in Nepal were scarce. One recruiting officer notes that. "It may seem strange, but it is an undoubted fact that a number of recruits are yearly obtained who profess to enlist merely for the sake of learning to read, write, and keep accounts." (Vansittart, 1915:59). As Nepali was the medium of communication in the Gurkha regiments, reading Nepali and conversing in it became a mark of prestige in Gurung villages.

According to H.B. Gurung (1965:119-120):

The process of transition from tribe to caste has led to the gradual erosion of the indigenous tribal culture to which the physical isolation of its montane habitat provides the last prop. But pahari culture has made inroads even in the tribal culture areas through the agency of the Gurkha soldiers who lead a stereotyped life in the army. The influence of the Gurkhas that has long provided the only source of external contact is best observed in the progressive "Sanskritization" of the old traditions. In the sphere of language, Nepali, the mother tongue of the ruling castes, has tended to oust all the various disjunct Bodic dialects.

Between 1894 and 1913 Limbu and Rai regiments were formed for the first time. The Nepal government's concern that too many Magars and Gurungs from western Nepal were being recruited forced the British to tap this new source of recruits in eastern Nepal.²⁸ But western Nepal continued to provide the greater bulk of Gurkhas, and Gurungs sent a greater proportion of their male population to the Indian Army than any other group.²⁹

**Gurkha Recruitment in Nepal. 1894–1913, by Ethnic Group,
and as a percent of Adult Male population of
Selected Nepalese Ethnic Groups
in 1913**

	West	East	Total	Percent	Percent of Males 16–50 Yrs Annually Recruited
Magar	11,781	1,013	12,794	36.1	.6
Gurung	7,548	888	8,436	23.8	1.1
Limbu	–	4,736	4,736	13.4	.8 (Limbu & Rai)
Rai	–	5,007	5,007	14.1	–
Other(Khas, Chetri, Sunwar, etc.	3,000	1,470	4,470	12.6	.1
Total	22,329	13,114	35,443	100.%	

Probable figures for Gurungs in the Indian Army are over twelve percent of service aged Gurungs living in Nepal in 1913, thirty-three percent in World War I, and as much as fifty-four percent in World War II.³⁰ This does not include Gurungs in quasi-military service outside Gurkha regiments. Between wars and after World War II, Indian Army regiments were at approximately their World War I strength of 50,000. Since Sino-Indian conflict of 1962, they nearly doubled. Counting British regiments, there may have been as many Gurkhas serving in the 1970s as there were in World War II. Gurungs have continued to provide a higher proportion of their total population for military service than other communities (Ragsdale, 1989; Harris, 1964:339).

Gurkha recruitment, and appreciation for support by the Nepalese government during Britain's struggle in the First World War, probably contributed significantly to Nepal's recognition by the British as a sovereign state in 1923 – a status much larger Indian states did not achieve (Mojundar, 1970:599–655; Jha, 1975:23; Husain, 1970). Other states lived under the doctrine of 'paramountcy', by which princely states belonged to a special category of colonial dependent 'allies'. Britain having the right to interpret the alliance as she chose.

Also Gurkha remittances have long been recognized as, until perhaps recently with the greater influx of tourism, Nepal's single greatest earner of convertible foreign exchange. Even as late as the 1970s they were greater than foreign aid and tourist expenditures combined (Ragsdale, 1989).

Gurungs, through their service in the Indian and British armies, have gained a higher literacy standard than many of their neighbors and through their remittances and savings have started many businesses in Pokhara and in the Terai (Ragsdale 1989; Ragsdale 1975:19-23).

Summary

Gurungs are one of Nepal's numerous ethnic communities. Gurung ethno-history, as best as it can be reconstructed with minimal documentation, indicates a previous pattern of agro-pastoralism, trade, and mercenary service that may date back to the seventh century and earlier in northern and eastern Tibet. It seems likely that a Gurung polity existed in the present Gurung homeland, made up of a village-centered league of principalities, possibly called *Gya-Rong*, the origin of the name "Gurung".³¹ A so-called caste distinction between two halves of the Gurung community may reflect the existence, as throughout Tibet, of ruling lineages that inter-married among themselves.

Immigrant high caste Indo-Nepalese rose to power in the *Gyarong* area now the Kali Gandaki Zone, between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries and, by the nineteenth century had created an empire whose eastern and western boundaries far exceeded those of today. Gurungs collaborated with this process of state formation, and in the process underwent profound social and economic change. Whatever historical records they possessed were obliterated, and their past was reinterpreted in Indo-Nepalese terms of hierarchical caste. Concessions brought Gurungs a semi-caste standing within the new Hindu social structure. Collaboration brought land and a measure of local power to the 'higher caste' Gurungs who cooperated with the new rulers. This resulted in a shift of a large proportion of the population southward to lower elevations, a greater commitment to settled agriculture, and over time a lessening of the importance of trans-Tibet pastoralism and trade, which had been perhaps the mainstay of the Gurung economy previously.

Gurungs continued to lead a semi-nomadic lifestyle, but rather than far-ranging trade and pastoralism, professional soldiery assumed a new and greater importance – though it seems likely it was in the role of professional

soldiers that Gurungs first arrived in Nepal in the seventh century. Large sheep and goat herds remain, but are no longer used to transport salt, and are confined to high mountain valleys above present Gurung settlements.

From 1816 onward, a process of 'Sanskritization' has continued as the focus of Gurung military service shifted from the Nepal to the Indian, and later British, armies. Since 1947, Gurungs have continued to serve in great numbers in the Indian Army, where the Kashmir question and the Chinese entry into Tibet have made Nepalese Gurkhas highly valued for their professionalism and their ruggedness as highlanders. Gurungs continue to play a diminished role in the remnants of the British empire as well. Recently, these people have become an economic force in their homeland, as they have used their remittances to enter into business. In many respects, what remains remarkable about these people is their ability throughout their traceable history to adapt to new situations and to maintain an economy that has been reliant on many rather than just a few sources of income.

Notes

- 1 The Nepalese *Chetri*, or warrior, Hindu caste has also been recruited to Gurkha regiments and share in this reputation. Unlike the others mentioned here, they are not a 'tribal' grouping of Tibeto-Burman Peoples, but of the Indo-Nepalese caste hierarchy.
2. For a full discussion of Gurung social organization, cf. Messerschmidt 1974.
Pignede 1966, 178; Vansittart 1915, 79-80.
3. Messerschmidt 1974, 7-11, for a more complete discussion of these terms and their Gurung equivalents.
4. For instance, see *Regmi Research Series* 1972b, 196-7, "... dense forests and precipices served as forts. Hence the clearing of trees at such places posed a danger to the Kingdom."
5. These two brothers are mentioned briefly in Pignede as legendary Gurung officers in a long list of Colonels who served in the Nepali Army. Pignede 1966, 37. Prahlad is mentioned in an 1805 military dispatch in Garhwal. *Regmi Research Series* 1974, 47.
6. Printed versions are Yogi Narharinath and Krishna Bahadur Gurung, *Gurung Ghale Raja Hamko Vamsavali* (Kathmandu: History Association, 2021 (1956)); and Sher Bahadur Gurung, *Gurungko Vamsavali* (Gurung Welfare Association, 2013 (1957)). These are based on an 1844 manuscript of Man Bahadur Gurung of Matilokot in

- Gorkha based in turn on a 1637 original by Bhoj Raj *Purohit* (Personal priest) Brahmin, told to Kaski Raja Jagdish Khana. This information came from a handwritten copy found in Lamjung by Messerschmidt 1974, 13-20.
7. *Go-Roman* is "cow's hide". Monier-Williams 1899, 363, 889. Interestingly, Brahmins are cited as being of "Gurung" military rank in Hasrat 1970, 147. No further details about this "Gurung" rank are given.
 8. In *Tamu-kwi*, *Ta* is "up" and *Mxi* is "person", so *Ta-Mxi* would seem to be "highlander". This is not confirmed by Gurung informants, but derived from Glover 1972, 2, 15.
 9. This is according to Chemjong's account. These vamsavali are presumably the *Kirat History*, Written in Limbu script, collected by Brian Hodgson in 1843, which Chemjong received as a micro-film copy, from Mr. R.K. Spring, Professor of the School of Oriental and African Studies, London. They could also be any number of unpublished Kirat manuscripts Chemjong cites, with little identification other than that they are in his private collection. Accurate documentation is one of the weaker aspects of his book. See Chemjong 1967, Part 2, Page "E".
 10. Stein 1972, 58-59, 64. Shakabpa 1967, 43-44. Later, in 1792, troops from *Gya-Rong* principalities in eastern Tibet made up the greater part of a Chinese-led army that defeated Nepal and established nominal suzerainty of China over Nepal, lasting until 1908. *Ibid.*, 122. Also see Bell 1927, 42.
 11. "Origin of Gurung and Mangar Tribes," in Chemjong, 1967, 57-70. Also see Hodgson 1972, part II: 67.
 12. A list of these principalities is found in Wylie, 1962, 102-3. The Tatu River was once, in 782, the actual border of Tibet. Shakabpa 1967, 41. The principalities are shown on maps in Bell 1927 and Stein 1972. On modern maps they lie at about 31° by 103° around the town of K'and-Ting, previously known as Tachienu. Modern accounts of the *Gya-Rong* area exist., of, Duncan 1952; Edgar 1932: 27-38; Torrance, 1932; Rockhill, 1891; and David-Neel, 1947.
 13. She was said to come from *Mong*. Stein, 1972: 58. This is the Tai Shan word for "principality". "Shan," *Encyclopedia Britannica* 1971.
 14. "Burma," *Encyclopedia Britannica* 1971; Leach, 1954: 239-242; Aung 1967: 280-281.
 15. Stein, 1972: 24, 62. Thomas, 1948: 31. The *rtsa-mi* are, literally 'grass-men'. The *rtsa* probably refers to highland pasture, towards the upper parts of rong defiles. A village of this name, *rtsa*, occurs in

such a valley in the Dolpo region of Nepal, and another village in northern Gurung territory (where Gurungs retain Tibetan dress and customs and speak Tibetan as well as Gurung) is *Tsa-me*. Snellgrove 1967, 2; Snellgrove 1961, 254. On *Tamme* see Shin'ichiro, 1972, 95-107.

16. Grenard, 1974, 366-367; "The Taorongpa, a much superior tribe... Their not very large country is comparatively thickly populated and covered with numerous villages; and they are the only one of all the tribes (of the region southeast of Jyekundo [modern Yu-Shu, 33° x 96.8°]) ... that occupies itself with agriculture." Tsa-Rong is at about 28° latitude, on the upper reaches of the Salween. Thomas 1948, 81. Nya-Rong is on the upper reaches of the Yalung, just southwest of Gya-Rong. *Ibid.*, 81-85. The Yalung itself, according to one authority, is a corruption of "*Gya-Rong*". Edgar 1922-23, 62 fn.
17. See Han-Seng 1949, 77-80. Duncan 1952, 96, 129, 199-200. Stein 1972, 34, 114-115. Norbu 1961 describes the long pilgrimage from the Ko Ko Nor region to Lhasa. Chinese tea was a staple trade item from the Sino-Tibetan frontier region, through Lhasa to Nepal, though tea produced by the British in India came to displace much of this trade.
18. According to this informant, Tamangs were originally Mongolian, not Tibetan. They possibly came from the Amdo region of northern Tibet, home of the *rts-mi*, which has an admixture of Mongolian and Tibetan peoples.
19. See Furer-haimendorf, 1966, 142. Chemjong 1967, pages "B-D". Also, Bista, 1967, 48, says "Ta-mang" means "horse trader" though this would not seem to be confirmed by Jaschke 1968. Thakalis refer to themselves as "*tamang*" as well, in their own language. The Nepalese government forbade the recruitment of Tamangs by the British, because they inhabited the hills around Kathmandu Valley, and area Nepal's rulers wanted to restrict geographic knowledge of. Undoubtedly this has much to do with the different lesser degree of Sanskritization of this group, compared to Gurungs.
20. The pass of Tichurong, leading into the region of Dolpo is a case in point of *rong* used as a place name. Snellgrove translates this as *dri-chu-rong*, "valley of fragrant water". Snellgrove, 1961, 33. Also Furer-Haimendorf, 1975, 204-222. To this day, even in lowland Lamnasa Village panchayat each Nepali place name has a Gurung counterpart.
21. Goldstein, 1974, 259-266. The Limi valley dwellers apparently maintain a precarious foothold in Tibetan pastures, despite Chinese

- restrictions against Nepalese entering Tibet. Access to these pastures is essential for their way of life.
22. Kumar 1967, 43; *Regmi Research Series* 1975, 140 (34-140); *ibid.* 1971a, 101-116. Two legendary Gurung officers (Natu and Prahlad) received inheritable, tax-exempt *Birta* landgrants for their services in organizing the Gurung contingent of the Gorkhali army raised in and around Pokhara. I visited their heirs in the village of Gaur, north of Pokhara surrounded by rich valley bottom land, in 1974. See also Regmi 1965, 23-25.
 23. *Regmi Research Series* 1971b, 31; *Ibid.* 1972a, 42-43; *Ibid.* 1975b, 53-54.
 24. Messerschmidt and Gurung describe how the gurung Subbha man Lal unadvisedly dressed to look his best, as a Tibetan, when he first met the Rana Prime Minister to establish his monopoly over the Nepal-Tibet salt trade through the Kali-Gandaki passes. Messerschmidt and Gurung 1974, 209.
 25. Mojumdar 1963, 43-153, 148; Muni 1973, Chapter IX; Husain 1970, Chapter 8.
 26. It is well known that Gurkhas were placed in front of British artillery in the siege of Lucknow, in case they attempted to side with the rebels, but less well known that an entire Gurung regiment of the Nepalese Army was similarly placed when some of its officers were discovered plotting to assassinate the Prime Minister for offering their use to the British. Husain 1970, 72-76; Hasrat 1970, 334; Oldfield 1880, 19-20.
 27. The increase in Gurkha infantry units compared with different regions to India between 1862 and 1914 was as below:

	<u>1862</u>	<u>1914</u>	<u>Change</u>
Punjab	28	57	+29
Gurkha (Nepal)	5	20	+15
East of Yamuna	28	15	-13
Bombay	30	18	-12
Madras	40	11	-29

Source: Muni 1973; Mojumdar 1963.

28. That the Nepalese were concerned about the alienation of Gurungs and Magars from Nepal is shown in their resistance to pressures from the British to resettle Gurungs and Magars in mountain colonies in India and their stipulation that neither of these tribes could be hired as

- laborers in India or Burma lest they stay on. Rose and Fisher 1970, 147-148; Hussain 1970, Chapter 8.
29. Tables created from data found in Vansittart 1915, 170, 174-177.
 30. This is based on the assumption of 23% of Gurkhas being Gurung, the proportion over twenty years up to World War I. See Ragsdale 1989 for sources.
 31. Possibly, Ghandrung, a large Gurung village visited by many tourists annually is a corruption of this name. As seen earlier, "Gurung" may possibly reach back farther to another league of principalities, also *Gyarong* in the Sino-Tibetan frontier region, and in fact the Yalung River may be a corruption of this name.

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OLD WAYS, NEW SITES: POWER & PRIVILEGE AT A NEPALESE WOMEN'S DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

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Indra Ban

I. Introduction

In a recent paper on Women in Development, Pradhan and Shrestha (1983) point to the way Nepalese women have been by-passed by many development projects. Since project organizers, in their view, have operated on western assumptions about the dichotomy of domestic and outside production, presuming that women are merely involved in the household, the projects have therefore concentrated on men, and foreground the point that there are few projects specifically geared to fulfil objectives for women. Such projects when they are devised then become significant.

Our focus is on one of these projects. We have several major objectives. First of all we want to detail the specific features involved in the organization, that is, attempt to indicate how the scheme works on the ground, and provide an outline of certain features of the personnel, that is give a profile of the overall composition in terms of age, sex, caste and education. But in addition to this we are concerned to draw out the sociological implications of the arrangements identifying how the patterning relates to the outside social relations, whether disjoined or repeating these; as well as indicating how this particular kind of organization has certain repercussions for the people concerned.

Though many of the people we spoke with assumed that we would be involved in formulating future policy, to our mind this would be presumptuous. Our major concern is to identify certain discontinuities and continuities in this new form at the local level of relations.

The focus of the study, a Nepalese development scheme expressly devoted to women has been in existence for a comparatively long time - over twelve years. In a sense it wouldn't be inaccurate to say that the current project is running on the momentum established by the nine years of effort of a past director and her team since they steered the project through the difficulties of trial-and-error that come at the initial stages of any inventory venture. Of course this is not to imply that the new team hasn't made its own input. Nor is it to say that matters are static and that no changes have occurred since that time. But it is to point to the fact that certain general objectives of policy and the procedural measures geared to effect these were determined in the earlier phase of operation and to a large extent continue. Both the official documentation and the promotional information explicitly state that providing women on low income with skills for income generation is one of the main purposes of the project. The measures adopted to effect this have been through the utilization of Nepalese traditional crafts making goods with appeal to foreigners and locals. The principal products of the project are:

A handwoven cloth on which traditional designs are printed using a traditional wood printing technique; the resulting cloth is fashioned into tablecloths, cushions, bags, and bedcovers, garments and the like and; costumed dolls modelled on the wide range of ethnic groups in Nepal and number of other similar handcrafted novelties.

In this regard what has been particularly significant is the revitalization of certain crafts (like block printing and weaving) that were on the verge of becoming defunct or were being threatened by the quality finished products made by industrial machines. Through aiming to produce marketable items, the administrators hope to make the project self-sufficient in the long-run though recognizing that government support and especially funding from foreign aid are necessary to keep the project viable at present. This important area of funding and the involvement of outside agencies (whether Nepalese or foreign) will not be considered here. Our main concern as we said before is with the institution's operation and the implications flowing from this.

Main Features of the Organisation's Structure

The Women's Development Project (W.D.P.) consists of a total of 47 persons, four of whom are located at Pulchok several kilometres away from the centre of production and administration, located at Lazimpat. Pulchok functions only as a sales outlet and as a centre for training women in machine sewing some of whom may subsequently be employed in productions at Lazimpat. Apart from being the site for production and the administrative centre of the W.D.P., Lazimpat also acts as a sales outlet of the various goods it produces. For details concerning each of the members of the organisation and profile of the organisation as a whole (to be discussed in section III) see the chart attached to the end of this paper. In the present section we want to draw attention to the way the organisation of the project is structured in terms of the sociological dimensions of power and privilege. This may be diagrammatically depicted as follows:-

1. Top Management:	- Director (1) - Deputy Director - (1) - Secretary/Accountant - (1) - V.S.O. officer - (1)	= 4 persons
2. Middle Management	- Trainer - (1) - Supervisor - (3) - Salesperson - (2)	= 6 persons
3. Producers:	- Skilled workers involved in the actual production of goods (e.g., machinists, cut block printers)	= 34 persons
4. ancillary Staff:	- Unskilled workers involved in servicing only (e.g. peon)	= 3 persons
<u>Total</u>		<u>= 47¹</u>

It is evident from our schematic representation that like most organisations in the field of commodity production, the structure is hierarchical. The line of command, however, is in some aspects, not typical of such organisations because unlike many other organisations in this field, the W.D.P. straddles both the public and private sectors of commodity production. This is most clearly manifested at the top management level.

First of all, it is important to note that the W.D.P. does not operate in isolation but rather it is anchored to certain bodies of the Nepalese government structures. Since the project comes under the rubric of the Nepal Women's Organisation (N.W.O.) and since it was the President of that wider organisation who appointed the current director of the W.D.P. then the project as a whole stands as an integral part of the larger government organisation. Moreover, since it is imperative that the project's director be recruited from the ranks of the Nepalese Civil Service, the project in turn, is also articulated with that component of the Nepalese government structures. In addition, insofar as the project depends largely on foreign aid, this places it even more decisively into the orbit of the Nepalese government's control. Yet, the project is expected to function like any other commodity production enterprise and compete in a market situation against independent competitors located in the private sector of production.

What is of relevance for our purposes here is that this interdigitation of the project and the governmental agency of the N.W.O. has implications that lead to a consideration of the question of authority. Since the director is accountable to the president of the N.W.O., it is clear that the director's position is not totally autonomous. At least in theory, this kind of arrangement allows for the possibility of constant intervention from the top, so to speak, though admittedly a lot would depend on the particular orientation of the persons concerned. Even so the authority structure allows for this interference.

It goes without saying that this bureaucratic feature is also present in the organization of the project's personnel. It appears even more blatantly with the workers at the level of production. Their autonomy is pretty minimal, limited to the way they execute their particular tasks yet in other matters, they are beholden to follow the orders from the top. While the expectation of obedience to authority is typical of usual organizational structure and might be seen as hardly warranting comment, nonetheless it is important since it becomes highly problematic in the context of disputes.

What we think significant here is that the structure privileges those with authority. In the case of the director, final say lies with the president of the N.W.O. whereas in the case of the workers, it lies with the director. With such structuring of authority the junior member in either relationship is provided with no outside place of appeal and arbitration when controversy arises. To take hypothetical case: on the one hand should the president of the N.W.O. instruct the director say to deploy a batch of goods: so that she, the

president can make an impressive gift to some important dignitary but on the other hand the director finds the instruction unacceptable since this would delay an export order by several months, there isn't much that the director can do except adhere to the instructions, albeit reluctantly. It is likely that in the latter's estimation the former's demands constitute a misuse of authority. Yet the president could stand by her decision, justifying the prestation in terms of publicity and goodwill. Then again a similar controversial situation could arise but in this context in a dispute between the directors and the workers where the latter find the director's rulings undesirable. This could happen say with the director's imperative that the producers start work on time and if not they should be penalized by the docking of their pay according to the time lost, or even being sent home and so having to forfeit the day's earnings. For that part the workers might find the director's insistence on promptness inflexible and lacking any understanding of the kind of transport difficulties which apply in the city. Rather than be polarized through loss of monies they may prefer to make up their time. On the other hand, the director could think that her ceding flexibility here might lead to a cavalier disregard for promptness and that the only way to ensure this is by resorting to such stern measures. As with the other hypothetical case it is of course the superior's decision which will prevail here in this or any other controversial issue.

But what needs to be foregrounded is that the bureaucratic necessity for authority to prevail can sometimes be counter-productive. The authority structure (which privileges the superior's authority in issues which are not exactly clear cut) can obviously have repercussions for the smooth operation of the enterprise. Obviously so because it opens up the possibility by prompting resentment, discouraging co-operation and inciting an orientation of intractability.

Yet the complications are not inevitable. It isn't simply the case that in controversial matters the senior person must stand as final authority since there are alternatives for settling disputes. One is arbitration from some separate, independent agency. Another is use of some kind of collaborative decision-making procedure. While to be sure litigation of any sort, the holding of discussions geared to obtain some kind of consensus, can assuredly be time consuming, they can also encourage factionalism and so provoke other problems. Yet it is also important to hear in mind that this need not necessarily be the case and a lot would depend on how the dispute settling activity was arranged. The disadvantage in allowing matters to stand as they are, is that the junior in any dispute could feel that there is no possibility for obtaining "justice". Where as there could be great benefits

accruing from procedures where all members, even those low in the hierarchy were involved in the decision-making processes. We'll turn to this issue again.

Another observation can be made about the organizational features. It would seem that hierarchical structuring of the personnel is directly related to the nature of their job functions. As elsewhere and obviously it is the administrators (those who make the decisions, carry responsibility for others and to whom the producers are accountable both for their behaviour while working and for their products) who stand high in the rank order of personnel; and it is those who are making something and who only have responsibility for themselves who stand as juniors. Put crudely those who produce stand at the lower levels, those who make decisions for others, stand at the top.

As for the supervisory positions. Those who are neither administrators nor producers are allocated to a level intermediary between those. At this level, the personnel fulfil two functions. The supervisors and teachers (at Pulchok) import their knowledge of sewing and check that the trainees have learnt these skills. The assistant supervisors of the store (Lazimpat) by keeping checks on the stock to be used which is finally transformed into finished goods, fulfils a surveillance function. While the assistant supervisor of production (Sewing Section) by allocating the specific items to be manufactured by the producers regulates the amount of materials to be used and in this sense is also involved in surveillance. Therefore it might be said that here too standing in the personnel hierarchy is linked to the nature of the job function: middle level management appears to rest on the surveillance function of the job.

The general patterning then tends to conform to that usually found in any bureaucratic organisation whether in government or commercial fields. Therefore though a NWO project there is not much that distinguishes this particular organization from these others.

However it is worth mentioning that this is not the only possibility. After all projects of this nature could be organized on a co-operative basis however this is not to deny the point that a co-operative concern might not be feasible under Nepalese conditions. It might not be possible because of customary practices. It is well established in the anthropological literature that rank ordering characterizes several basic indigenous structures (like those of kinship, age and gender) where obedience and deference to the particular senior person is the expected mode of orientation to be accorded by the

junior. Nevertheless an enterprise utilizing a co-operative means in decision-making processes might work. If it did it could also have advantageous repercussions, especially by encouraging each person's commitment to the project's success and their personal identification with it. The significant point here is that one will not know whether a co-operative project in the Nepalese context is viable or not unless the method is tried. These observations would apply not only to the producers, assistant supervisors and the top echelons in administration but also to other workers involved in the assortment of services. Be that as it may.

Of concern here is the nature of the patterning. What is significant about the standing of sales person is that they appear to be located higher in the hierarchical structure than the craft workers. The fact that the saleswoman at Pulchok was previously a teacher and continues to draw the same salary (see chart) testifies to this possibility. Perhaps the relevant criterion here is the required qualification in literacy and numeracy. The salesman at Lazimpat is especially highly qualified, being a graduate. If that is so it is the educational achievements which cede such people their particular status and emolument.

Of course not all servicing personnel obtain such advantageous conditions. It is the people undertaking the straightforward manual tasks, like ironing and washing, who are located somewhat low in the hierarchical structure.

Then there are the other ancillary members of the personnel who stand somewhat outside the formal structuring (watchman).

As for the other positions and despite a number of complications, we think that the overall status patterning falls into three distinct overall categories. On the one hand there are the senior administrators along with those juniors to them like the teachers and the salespersons. Next there are those who make things, the producers. At the bottom are those manual workers who are not making objects but merely treating them by washing and ironing. It seems to be an invariable feature that such personnel get a lowly rank, even though their services are just as essential to the productions as the others. Though invariable it is, needless to add, not inevitable.

Before winding off this section, we want to turn to a policy of the NWO regarding the mode of appointment and consider how this has bearings on the director's management and exercise of power. Not only is the Director

appointed by the president of the NWO but so is her second-in-charge the Deputy Director, as mentioned before. This patterning of appointments apparently is a characteristic feature of the Nepalese/(civil) Service.

While it might appear a simple matter it is perhaps not the case since this mode of appointing senior people carries possibilities that many negatively affect the director's control, the person responsible for the project's operation. What this outside mode of appointment means in effect is that the second-in-charge, like the director, also has a direct connection with the ultimate authority-source, in this case the president of the NWO. Therefore the authority of the officer-in-charge, the director of the project is mitigated by this extra tie of her assistant since hers is not the sole connexion with the authority-source. This arrangement has repercussions that we'll come back to shortly. Of relevance here is the fact that had it been the director who had appointed here second-in-charge then some kind obligation on the latter's part would have eventuated as is customary according to the Nepalese cultural mores. However with the appointment coming from the outside, as it did in this circumstance, there is no necessity for the deputy to feel loyal and obligated to the director on this particular score. In short, the director's ability to evoke a sense of obligation from her assistant is accordingly mitigated. That possible foreclosure of obligation is one possibility affecting the director's control over her staff.

There is also another way of viewing the effects of this mode of appointment. While the director's command is mitigated, by this kind of bureaucratic procedure, the president's position can be advantaged. Specifically speaking this mode of appointing the two senior positions is of a kind which can operate towards the central agency's (president of the NWO) retention of some kind of control even though authority has been delegated. Not only does the president gain an ally at the site and one who belongs to the senior administration ranks but this in turn also opens up the possibility of the assistant undertaking surveillance, should the president find it necessary and desirable. In other words the machinery for checking on the enterprise's no. 1 (the director) can also be established by the dual appointment mode and accordingly countervail the president's loss of immediate control that comes with delegation.

Let us try and bring these points together. We have noticed that this mode of appointing senior staff can effect favouring the president's authority to the director's cost: if both women in the project are beholden to the president for their appointments, that person gains two loyalties and not just

the one as with the case of a single appointment; but at the same time the director's internal power over her staff is concomitantly curtailed when the appointment of her deputy is not made by her. The arrangements then are of a kind which allow for the possibility of preventing the director's total and easy consolidation of power while the outside authority (the president) can maintain its presence within in the form of the allay, (the second-in-charge, the assistant). Such significant consequences and their possibilities however depend on the establishment of a simple structuring of alignments. Instead of establishing a straightforward hierarchical chain of command and loyalty (going from the president to the director and then from the director to the next level) such arrangements merely articulate two sets of dyadic links to pinnacle (director to president, deputy-director to president also). Perhaps that is why this mode has been a characteristic practice of traditional Nepalese bureaucracy in the past where the state sent its official to take charge of areas outside the centre.² The practice of having a second man on the spot with a direct connexion to the centre and obliged to it (the centre) could serve the centre's favour if that person acted accordingly. Of course there is no guarantee that the deputy will actually act accordingly but the presence of such a mechanism does open up the space for this to happen.

There were probably sound reasons why this standard mode of appointing both of the senior personnel was practised in the past. Considerations of the problems of central surveillance and control prompted by inadequate and slow communications across vast distances probably played a role in the Nepalese state's implementation of this practice. Putting the matter crudely this bureaucratic procedure could have been a necessary part of a mechanism of surveillance facilitating the implementation of surveillance by the junior person on the senior. The former would not have been constrained by niceties of loyalty to the person immediately in charge. However irrespective of the mode's origin and its bureaucratic effectiveness in the past, it seems to us that in current circumstances it demands close scrutiny. In fact in our consideration the method can undercut the director's ability to administer effectively and render her authority somewhat delicate.

Let's take a hypothetical example, a situation where there is disagreement between these two senior women personnel. It entails a situation where the deputy wants to do "X" but the director disapproves yet the deputy goes her own way. The channel that is usually available via the bureaucratic procedure is that where the Director of the enterprise takes the matter to the ultimate authority, in this case the President of the N.W.O.

What makes it difficult for the director to act decisively is uncertainty of the outcome of this procedure. It is hardly a straightforward matter since there are two possible negative repercussions that could arise if the woman-in-charge did take action. Even raising the problem with the President is somewhat hazardous for the director since the president might take the complaint as a criticism of her judgment - after all it was she who selected the second-in-charge. Or then again, the fact of the director's having to bring there internal dispute to the outside authority could be taken as an indication of her own incompetence in controlling her staff - in fact negatively reflecting back on herself.

Therefore as far as the director is concerned not taking any action at all might be assessed as preferable. At least it has the advantage of keeping the problem contained within the project site and avoiding exposures to the uncertainties that action of this kind might propel.

But in turn this however can have repercussions for the smooth running of the enterprise. Of course what this means is that the conflict between the director and her deputy remains unresolved, allowing the junior member to go her own way with impunity.

This eventuality, should it arise, of course has wider implications. It propels a situation where the director cannot readily act in a manner that she thinks desirable in getting maximum efficiency from the women for whom she the director, is responsible in her position as director.

To our way of thinking it is the particular mode of appointment in the context of the matter of responsibility that especially needs to be closely examined. If the director does not have total authority over all the personnel (including her second-in-charge) yet at the same time is held totally responsible for the management and success of the project, then the viability of her position is seriously undermined. And accordingly so is the operation of the project itself.

While we have just examined one particular relationship and difficulties that may arise when the maneuverabilities of the person in charge of the running of the enterprise is constrained by certain arrangements: and earlier also considered the complications that also accrue by virtue of ultimate control residing outside, it is now necessary to return to a theme that relates to the producers and one partly touched on before.

One of the most important general observations that can be made by scrutinizing the listing of job functions is the high degree of separate specialization. On the whole the worker operates piece-meal, each doing her/his own particular task. To our way of thinking this has important repercussions. To be sure working at the project does undoubtedly provide the women concerned with particular skills and skills that enable them to earn monies. However, given the stress on job specialization the worker can only but remain a specialist in that arena. Therefore it is of limited benefit since a woman's maneuverability on the job market is facilitated by being trained in a number of skills and not just one.

Such a set up therefore militates against the possibility that those women with only specialized craft skills to improve on their position. Without a scheme of extensive in-service training at the site there is no opportunity to extend expertise and accordingly the producers and workers have little opportunity for lateral job mobility (Mazumdar, 1982). Let alone more ambitious possibility of establishing and running their own enterprise, should any of them want to and should they be able to gain a access to funds to do so. Given these features it means that most producers are likely to remain producers, dependent on the project (or like agencies) rather than move out and create spaces for other woman and rather than open their own business in comparable enterprises and there by create jobs for other woman. In short such arrangements do not have a momentum for expansion. While this is important especially from the perspective of "development", there is another implication following from the project's operation which is significant from the perspective of women's issues.

Not only are the jobs highly particularized but they are also hierarchies effecting discrete job functions. This means, as we mentioned earlier, that the craft producers and manual workers are separated from administration and the concomitant planning and decision-making processes. Though the project does provide opportunity for these women to learn skills for income-generation a point that we cannot emphasize too often, the project's organizational arrangements nonetheless keep such women in the subservient position. In other words the arrangements maintain inequalities of these women vis-a-vis the more advantaged women, as well as the project's senior men. Leaving aside the issue of men's presence for the moment, let's concentrate on the nature of the relations between the women in the project. We observe then that the arrangements are of a kind which to a large extent maintain the traditional patterning where those advantaged by higher education stay at the senior positions where as those without such

advantages remain subservient to them (even though they are given the opportunity to learn the skills of income generation). And from that angle we might say that class inequalities are articulated here even though the context itself diverges from what is usually understood as entailing class relations. But in whatever way the nature of the relations is described, there is little doubt that superordination/subordination obtains between the women concerned. So while one cannot deny that the operation of the project may serve the interests of development by producing goods for the tourist and export markets as well as the pockets of the producers in the creation of jobs, one ignore the presence of this superordinate/subordinate positioning of some women vis-a-vis other women. This raises two further points.

From the nature of the alignment we can't emphatically say that it is the senior women who gain most for after all a lot depends on the relative initial situations of each particular woman, but we can say that the women at the top do undoubtedly benefit handsomely and also reap the rewards of privilege and rank. This is manifested not only in the general acknowledgement of their superior job roles but also in the sites where they work and the conveniences immediately at their disposal. One need hardly describe the offices and its equipment, contrasting these with the workshop accommodation. Nor need one refer to the deference the senior people are accorded, irrespective of the worker's private considerations. Most of these details are not only well-known but are also taken for granted both by the people themselves and often also by researchers. Nor should one ignore the prerequisites that befall the privileged. If it is the senior women who are exposed to foreign officials it is they who first of all learn what outside scholarships for women are available. And it is generally those senior women who obtain such grants via the personnel contact. The fact that it is usually the senior women involved in the array of organizations dealing with women's issues who may reap the benefits (scholarships and are accorded privilege, a voice in wider arenas both inside and outside the particular country concerned) this fact has prompted the coinage of the term "femmocrat" to characterize the advantaged position of such women in Australia. Since the features pertaining have applicability elsewhere, as in Nepal, usage here is perhaps not unwarranted, either.

So what about those less privileged? With this we turn to the second point. Though the structuring of status privileging and authority demarcates the women into two major categories (the superordinate and subordinate) it is not inevitable that this should invariably be the case. A hierarchical organization is not the only type. There is also the possibility of co-operatives where all members are involved in planning and decision making,

as mentioned previously. Such an egalitarian arrangement to a project's operation might however not be feasible. Nor may the women concerned find it desirable. Nonetheless that is a possibility that ought to be noted. Of course it's not the only alternative to what is currently practised. As a kind of intermediate possibility, one could have a situation which allowed the producers and workers to participate in certain decision-making processes, especially in matters that directly affected them. Unless some concessions of this nature are made, femmocratic control is as likely to become a characteristic of Nepalese Women's enterprises as they have become elsewhere. Even so one must recognise that there are certain complications which indicate that the matter is hardly clear-cut. We refer to a basic dilemma which characterizes projects of this kind.

The basic dilemma lies in the difficulty of deciding whether to privatize the goal of the self-sufficiency or the goal of women's welfare. The dilemma is encapsulated in the project's label which includes the relevance of development and the objective of reaching self-sufficiency and not being dependent on aid; as against the relevance of women and the objective of pursuing women's welfare which can be costly. Given the current state of affairs at the project this would entail continuing reliance on aid. Since many of the arrangements that would enhance the junior women's positions (involvement in decision making; or the more time-consuming possibility of co-operative enterprise) are either time-consuming or costly, if effected they would curtail the objective of self-sufficiency. The difficulties are compounded by the other possible procedures (the teaching of multiple skills, and the establishment of mechanism for handling disputes either through discussions with all members or through the use of a separate and independent arbitration agency) for coping with the disadvantage of the junior women.

And the dilemma becomes more complex if one also recognises the possibility that some women may not desire to embark on a work-life of constant discussion. They may think that those delegated to do the job ought to cope with its headaches.

PROFILE OF THE PROJECT'S MEMBERS & CONDITIONS OF WORK³

(1) Modes of Remuneration & categories of personnel

The profile of the personnel deals with a number of important features and implications arising from these. Perhaps the best way to deal with these is to take them point by point.

As far as remuneration is concerned there is not only a range of amounts paid but also an assortment of modes, from piece-rates to daily wages (with or without public holidays) to monthly salaries. While a quick glance might give the impression that it is duration of service which constitutes the criterion for applicability to receive a salary, this doesn't appear to hold because the newly appointed salesman/messenger obtains a salary even though he has just been appointed. Nor is it a difference based on personnel status according to the three general categories discussed previously (administrative staff, producers and workers) since both the peon at Pulchok and the fashion dressmaker at Lazimpat are paid by salary. However, if we focus on the producers only, it seems that duration of employment does constitute a criterion for payment as a daily wage since this is the mode of remuneration in all those instances where a worker has been at the project for less than a year and a half. In the cases of these women the reward is pretty basic, fifteen rupees per day, which makes if Rs. 90 per week and Rs. 360 per month as long as they don't get sick and no public holiday falls during the time. This of course reminds us that we are not just examining the modes of remuneration but amounts also. And in terms of these two features the women paid by daily wage are the worst off - a low amount, and an amount which is variable because in time of sickness or public holidays the payments can get even smaller. In contrast, salaries obviously give a person the security that comes with fixed income. So initially, one might notice the discrepancies in terms of modes of remuneration, discrepancies to greater and lesser amounts; and discrepancies as to fixity as against variability.

So at this stage we think it useful to consider the pay arrangements in terms of the three major categories that we are utilizing to break down the personal organization.

(a) Administrative staff (senior and junior or top level and middle level management)

All senior members (director, deputy and accountant/secretary) are paid by monthly salary in amounts over the thousand mark. Compared to the others the director is well imbursed not only getting Rs. 2,000 per month from the project but this is supplemented by her civil service salary. Therefore she would obtain a larger pay packet than the Deputy who receives Rs. 2,500 per month. Yet given that the Deputy works on a part time basis the discrepancy here is not significant. What is significant is the discrepancy between the administrators' rewards and the other women involved in the life-line of the Project. If we just take the first producer on the list, the young woman who receives Rs. 480 per month for making fashion garments and

compare her income with the Deputy's, we see that the Deputy gets more than five times the producer's although the Deputy works on a part-time basis.

The discrepancy between the junior administrators, i.e. the supervisors and assistant supervisors is not as great. They obtain less than a thousand rupees a month.

Nor is there much discrepancy between the producers and the most junior level in the administrative staff to which we have allocated the sales persons⁴, since these people obtain salaries ranging from Rs. 600 to Rs. 850 which are not vastly higher than the producers but they do have the advantage of receiving salaries. This means that they, unlike the women on daily wages and piece rates, have security in obtaining a constant amount. Moreover it appears that duration of employment is not a condition that is relevant to their mode of remuneration whereas it does seem to be relevant to what happens with producers.

(b) The producers (specialists)

It is in this category that we find that all four possible modes of payment are applicable. To repeat, these comprise:

- (1) Daily wage but no payment for Saturdays & public holidays.
- (2) Remuneration based on output piece rate only.
- (3) Remuneration based on output plus concessions for Saturdays and public holidays.
- (4) Salary.

The criterion for obtaining a daily wage of Rs. 15 (with no payment for Saturdays and public holidays) seems to depend on duration since all these producers have only been at the project for a few months except one of those who have been at the project for longer than two years are advantaged by being paid salaries. It is with the craftswomen, the printers, weavers and the sewing specialists of household goods that remuneration based on output applies. Here there are two possibilities - piece-rate only otherwise piece-rate plus the concessions regarding Saturdays and public holidays. In their cases length of time at the project seems to determine which mode of piece-rate is to apply since those who've been employed for several years obtain the better conditions.

It is interesting that it is in tasks which are solitary, repetitive but also demanding concentration (as with printing, weaving and sewing

household goods) that are paid according to output. Doll-making in contrast brings all doll-makers together where each attends to a different part of the operation and is that kind of work which requires less concentration. It's hard to make errors in stuffing something or in hand-sewing the dolls' clothes. If errors occur they are readily fixed. Whereas if a print, for example, has been inaccurately placed on a bedspread the item can be ruined. Similarly for the demands that go with the sewing of the household goods as well as weaving. Given the requirements of skill and especially attentiveness, paying these workers (the sewers, the weavers and the printers) according to output then makes good business sense, and management is surely aware since the policy is a result of its decision.

We think it significant that it is with the bulk of the producers that their remuneration is made contingent on their actual production. None of the other categories whether at the higher structural levels or even the manual workers (like those whose work is ironing) are placed in a situation where actual performance determines what amount of payment they will actually get. This is not to say that some of the piece-rate workers (with or without the special extras) don't find the method acceptable, as some in fact approve of this mode of reward. But it is to say that other types of workers don't have to perform under the same kind of constraints. Obviously what it means in effect is that if these producers don't perform well they end up penalizing themselves. So while the incentive based on output can and in many instances does propel productivity, and can generate desirable performances from these producers nevertheless when performance is not up to scratch, it has its cost for the worker concerned.

There's another kind of adverse effect that can arise from this piece-rate mode of remuneration. Though the mode does allow the worker to increase her income by improving her work productivity, it also entails the possibility of self-penalization and therefore demands a constant self-monitoring. This can have an emotional cost. Perhaps it is not fortuitous that the section where accord and laughter spilled over was that where the women collectively worked at making dolls and where payment was not based on output. And in spite of the fact that these women were located in the most cramped conditions, all huddled together on the floor. As for the producers who are paid according to output management policy imposes a further condition which puts them under greater strain, the policy of docking wages where the worker has spoilt the material. So although these women can earn up to Rs. 25 per day (Rs. 600 per month) an appealing amount by Nepalese standards, this depends on becoming proficient in their work and

being over-attentive.

Similar demands however are not made on those who obtain salaries, an obvious but important point.

(c) The Producers (manual workers)

Although there are few manual workers (the man who does the washing and the peon and the women who do the ironing) we do find variability in the mode of payment of these few. What at first sight appears as significant is that it is the men who are salaried while the women are not. But whether or not a criterion of gender enters here is hard to say. Perhaps the difference is a function of the varying period of employment since it is the women ironers who are comparative newcomers who are paid by daily wage while it is the older workers who are on a salary and happen to be men in this particular category.

(2) Some implications

What we need consider now are the general patterning. Taking the entire personnel involved in the project with the exception of the canteen businessman, no man is paid on a daily wage or by piece-rated (either with or without the extras). All the men get salaries even if they are involved in basic manual tasks (washing or serving as a peon) or if they have only been recently appointed (as with the Lazimpat salesman). What was said earlier about the differential repercussions of producers versus others will also have bearings in this context of differential conditions applying to the sexes. By this we are not suggesting that the senior staff set out to favour the men but that this one outcome, if fixity of salary is perceived as a privilege. In a sense these men are privileged if they are not exposed to contingencies which penalize their income as happens with a daily wage. Nor are they exposed to the strains of being paid according to output as happens with those on piece-rates. Nor do any of the men on the project obtain incomes as low as those women on a daily wage of Rs. 15 (without any of the extras). While inexperience might be a consideration in the case of the particular women whose income is low (where at best they may get Rs. 360 in a month) nonetheless no comparable constraint was applied to the newcomer salesman/messenger who is also a comparatively recent arrival.

Another interesting feature to be discerned from the details in the profile is the absence of reward for long duration of service. One woman who is currently a supervisor and has been with the project for eleven years, a considerably long time, only receives a salary of Rs. 825 per month almost

the same as two recent arrivals, the salesman/stock recorder (Phulchok) and the assistant supervisor both of whom get Rs. 25 per month less than this woman. Given that the assistant supervisor is a graduate it appears that the payments are geared to privilege those with higher education. Long service doesn't seem to be of relevance to remuneration in the case of the doll-makers either though one has been with the project for five years, and another for three years, both get an identical salary (Rs. 480).

It would seem that the state's ruling as to yearly increments specified by the Labour Laws is not being recognized and enforced. In this context the body responsible would be the N.W.O., the ultimate source of authority. A directive from them would have to be followed by the person in charge of the project. Perhaps it is shortage of funds which prevents the N.W.O. initiating the implementation of this government ruling yearly increments.

Similar argument could perhaps be made vis-a-vis a point not raised in our chart that is, the spasmodic manner by which the senior staff are paid—often months later.⁵

However like most difficulties the matter comes back to priorities. If the N.W.O., the agency ultimately responsible for the project, is a government agency which articulates with other bodies controlling the allocating of funds, then it seems fair to say that the project's economic difficulties appear to come low on the government's list of priorities. In fact there is a fairly common assumption that the Women's Development Skill Project should be funded primarily from outside agencies. It makes one wonder whether the state is acting on this opinion by being tardy in paying the senior people and so is prompting them to seek monies with the foreign aid programmes. We are not saying that this is definitely the case, but if it is, then the government's strategy is one which falls back into third world dependency on foreign aid. And is engineering a situation where the women concerned are impelled to suffer (with salaries in arrears) or to take action with foreign funding agencies to change matters.

Coming back to the immediacy of the project site. A perusal of the educational qualifications, or perhaps more precisely the comparative paucity of qualifications, indicates that to a certain extent the project is fulfilling one of its major goals, providing opportunities to women who would otherwise not have such opportunities to gain skills in income generation. None of the female producers and manual workers (according to our categorization) are graduates. In fact many have had no formal education. Even so what also has

to be remembered is that those with higher education coming into the project are allocated the more senior positions and the favourable mode of remuneration as well as the higher amounts. While those with less formal education get the jobs with less status and lower reward. So the two categories start with a difference and to a large extent this difference is maintained. The exceptions apply to the few cases where the women (all young) with some higher education are able to and are continuing their studies. The bulk however are not. And should they stay with the project and the project continues its present policy, most of those women are likely to remain producers. Therefore in the new context of the development project the differential statuses are retained between those with differential educational standards. From that angle inequalities between women persist.

And the disparities can continue. Speaking generally it has to be acknowledged that it is the senior administrative staff who through their involvement in a project of this nature, are linked into what might be called an international community: the global circuit which incorporates the so called experts in foreign aid, development, academic research and feminine movements. By being inserted into this prestigious arena, they are exposed to possibilities where personal benefits can accrue (the Nepalese candidate for the expenses-paid international conference; the personal scholarship; incorporation into foreign agencies as the indigenous employee by virtue of experience at a development project; the establishment of one's own local consultancy by having the right credentials, obtained by having worked at the project and so forth). While we would not ignore the fact that some of these perquisites can be obtained by membership in the civil service, nonetheless involvement in a women's development project gives greater visibility and opens up additional avenues like the assortment of feminist networks, availability for scholarships. As one cynic working for the Poverty Commission in Australia commented with regard to the experts' rewards; "There's money in poverty", so we might also observe "there's kudos in women's subordination". It goes without saying that this is not to deny the tremendous efforts a lot of women have put into such projects, being subjected to demoralization through constant frustrations, nor to denigrate their impressive achievements, but it is to notice that there are also substantial rewards to be personally gained through involvement in these kinds of schemes. Schemes characterized as morally propel.

The point we want to make is not then to undercut the efforts and successes, the work energy and imagination of the senior administrators of such projects but simply foreground what can tend to get overlooked; the

major objective is to provide opportunity for the ordinary women personnel; and if that is so, the existence and operation of the project itself depends on the presence and work of the other women (the producers and manual workers). Without them, there is no project. Without their stamping and restaging the block on the fabric from ten to four every day for six days in a row, for example, there would be no justification for the senior personnel of N.W.O. members to participate in conferences held more often than not at international centres like Washington, Moscow or Delhi discussing the effectiveness of such schemes. This means that such privileges depend on the daily presence of those women who at the project's site spend their time printing fabrics, making dolls, sewing up cushions, fabricating smart gear, or ironing the finished products. If that is the case, then we might say that one category of women constitutes the "infrastructure" for the kudos of the others.

Another way of approaching the problem is to pose the question: why don't some of the craftswomen get into this international circuit. Immediately a number of reasons come to mind: their inexperience, limited all-round knowledge and lack of education, especially lack of fluency in foreign languages like English. However in response one might also say that though these are good reasons for the current ineligibility of such women from access to the perquisites, yet couldn't there be some attempt to rectify the deficiencies. Of course in turn a counter-argument would ask how and at what immediate cost; and even if it were possible it would take years. It would be inordinately difficult. Despite such arguments to view the task as insurmountable seems to us somewhat defeatist and an approach geared to retain the discrepancies between these two categories of women. So as things stand it is the women workers who are excluded and this is taken for granted, at least to a large extent. And to a large extent it is taken for granted that the educated "leaders" be given the privileged opportunities.

Our concern in making these statements is to counterbalance what is usually expressed about these projects – that they provide opportunities for women to gain skills in income generation. We want to counterbalance the voiced declarations by stating what is often unstated in the policy speeches and hand-outs – that such projects also provide opportunities for those already privileged. Nor can this kind of opportunity site be dismissed as inconsequential and hardly worth a mention if it entail high international stakes for the players. Needless to add this brings us to issue of wide theoretical interest which we will turn to later.

(3) Distribution Of Personnel Within the Occupational Hierarchy

Though the point was mentioned before one significant features about the ethnic and caste patterning of positions is that the administrative posts are filled by high caste women. At least at this level one might simplify and say "caste equals class".

A second feature is the predominance of Newar woman at the project. Most of these derive from the general caste of Jyappu (the Maharjan and Ranjit) located in the middle range of the Newar Caste.⁶ It is those Newar women who constituted the bulk of specialist producers.

Though traditionally their caste is renowned for craft skills, the woman didn't necessarily come to the project as experts but rather learned the required technique at the site. The reasons they gave for joining the project were economic. One of the Newar men in discussing their present at the project, remarked that "They would prefer to be autonomous, even as to running a small shop, rather than be subjected to dictates of others". Whether his assessment applies to the higher Newar castes only and not to other Newars (or the Parbatya for that matter) is hard to tell. But his point about the Newar inclination to participation commerce finds testimony in the many shops (from bigger enterprises in the main shopping streets to small fruit and vegetable stalls) run by Newar women. And one also has to acknowledge that there might be a stronger disinclination on the part of these higher caste Newar women since their presence at the project appears to rest on peculiar personal circumstances. Information gained but not systematically itemized on the chart reveals that one high caste Newar woman is physically handicapped, another is a widow, another separated from her husband, another is a young motherless girl. another young high caste Newar woman for her part simply regards the project as a stepping stone and hopes to eventually leave and establish her own fashion business.

When it comes to a consideration of the reasons for the presence of high caste Parbatya as producers or manual workers it seems that these relate to personal difficulties. Most have had problems of various kinds⁷ while three others have certain physical disabilities. One Chhetri woman made no bones about the hostility she feeling having to work at the project, the only one to voice such strong antipathy. Given that they are comparatively few Brahmins and Chhetris belonging to these categories (craft specialists producers and manual workers) and that personal rather than economic circumstances appear to have prompted their participation in the project. This is significant.

At this juncture let us draw together some of the threads that have emerged up to this point. The discussion suggests that most of the high caste women (both parbatya and Newar) are present at the project because of particular personal misfortune that have impelled them to earn monies or acquire certain skills. On the other hand those women from the lower caste ranks (the Maharjans, and Ranjits) are present because of explicit economic reasons. This indicates that where the project's expressed goal is to provide opportunities for the personally disadvantaged and the chance for women to learn income-generating skills, then the two respective general goals take on a caste patterning: the higher caste women work (in the producer specialist section or manual worker section) because of personal misfortune while the other women in the lower caste ranks are present because of the economic opportunity offered by the scheme.

What must also be noticed are the absences. Of significance is the fact that within the categories that we've labelled "craft producers" and "manual workers there is a paucity of members from the tribal groupings, so few that a general discussion of patterning could proceed without mentioning them. What is just as striking is the absence of women from the once labelled "pani nachalne Jat" and known as the Untouchables in the Anglophone literature.

The absence of women from this category does not exactly reflect well on those responsible for its operation, whether at the N.W.O. level or at the site of the project itself.⁸ One would have expected their commitment to a policy of Untouchable recruitment but presumably this has not been the case. Of course we should also recognise that there could be reasons for their absence. The omission might be due to the senior people's awareness of difficulties posed by the Untouchables reluctance to work there, should this be in fact the case, where these women prefer to follow occupations open to them because they are more familiar. and nowadays perhaps even more lucrative with the changing circumstances of tourism. Perhaps the inaction from the top derives from its assessment of the difficulties that might ensure, suspecting that the Untouchables presence at the project might provoke unease amongst the other women and that it would be politic to side the issue entirely. If this is indeed the case it appears somewhat defeatist even though it could be justified by reference to lack of guidelines from the government whose approach is somewhat equivocal.⁹ But whatever the considerations take, if there were any, the fact remains that, at least to our knowledge, the project has no explicit policy for attracting women from this low caste to participate in the venture. And it's a sad omission in a scheme directed at providing opportunities for women in onerous predicaments. Since

it is undeniable that these people are disadvantaged by the construction of their untouchability one would have expected some kind of statement, albeit delicately phrased, as to the project's policy towards such women, given that the project is geared to improving the lot of Nepalese women. The most serious finding of all appears to be that their absence hasn't even arisen as a problematic because their usual exclusion is so taken for granted.

To turn to the tribal category (which incorporates an assortment of people) and its position within the work structure. Even though within the overall demographic compass, tribal numbers are not overly large, their representation at the project nonetheless is very small, only three. And when it is recalled that one of these is the wife of the nightwatchman/caretaker and joined the project via this connection, the point becomes even more vivid. The other is a widow but is also continuing her education and intends to take the SLC. The third tribal woman at the projects isn't a producer but is located within the top category at the managerial level as an assistant supervisor and as a graduated. As to the possible reasons for the comparatively low tribal representation at the project especially given their strong handicraft tradition we hazard the view that it is due to a verity of reasons. It is possible a number of tribal women are already tied up in handicrafts produced for private industry (e.g. carpet weaving), some businesses are themselves run by tribal women. It is also likely that some tribal women constitute some of the invisible producers working at home, providing goods for the project, for as was mentioned earlier the project also farms out work. But without the specific breakdown of which caste categories were involved in working at home we cannot advance this particular point further. What however can be considered is the possibility that some tribal women may be ignorant of the project's existence. Knowledge of the project's existence is relevant to recruitment for as we saw earlier eventual incorporation within the enterprise in many cases depended on that information (and the subsequent tapping of personal contacts).

It remains to consider the top levels (that is, the administrators, managers, salespersons, recorders, located in the categories administrators and producers) and examine their caste composition. Leaving aside distinctions of sex for the moment, we notice that there are more Parbatya Brahmin/Chhetris than any other caste in these top levels of the organizational structure. As for the tribals it is significant that one is represented here, given that so few tribals work at the project. Yet the same cannot be said for the Newars. Although they constitute the bulk of the biggest category the producers, they are poorly represented in the top levels for there are fewer Newars than

Brahmins and Chhetris. In other words, authority lies with the Parbatya Chhetris even though most producers are Newars.

The location of Parbatya in top administrative positions is significant because it reflects the more widespread pattern of authority distribution found outside the project. As is well known the bulk of most senior personnel in governmental bodies is recruited from the ranks of high caste Parbatya. Which is not to say that there are no Newars in high office but that they do not predominate.

While of course one might hardly expect otherwise than to find a repetition of the cultural patterning in the caste composition of the personnel's job positions, where it is mainly the high caste who are in positions of authority and lower in positions of authority subordinate labour power. Yet it should be stressed that this isn't inevitable. After all it is not unreasonable to expect some attempt at innovation in a project of this kind. Furthermore the total absence of members of the Pani nachalne jat suggests a persistence of values discriminating against them though admittedly more precise information is necessary if one is to be more definitive here. Even so not only are these women absent but the others at the project are silent about this absence and it is this silence which to our minds is disturbing.

(4) Ethnic & Educational Differences & Privileges

The women who obtain high rewards from the project are those with higher educational qualifications. This is obvious in the case of those who hold the positions of director and deputy. Their salaries are considerably higher and underscore the point. But one should also notice that one woman with a degree began work as an assistant supervisor on a salary of Rs. 800 per month, an amount considerably higher than that of the craftswomen.

At a more general level one might say that knowledge qualifications constitutes one condition amongst others, for the effecting of privileges. However given that the two most senior women from the project belong to the Parbatya ethnic category it would seem that high educational qualification by itself might not be sufficient and that location in this ethnic category also appears to be relevant to obtaining high stakes. Yet one ought to be cautious here since ethnic/caste membership in itself might not be pertinent but rather a function of other social processes. The ability to tap a connexion who in turn has the pertinent influence to give priority to the seeker of support. That contact is said to have "source-force"¹⁰. From information that we have, it's interesting that the director appointed by the president is a relative of hers;

while the deputy, also appointed by the president, belongs to the same elite network and these women are known to each other. While one might also add in parenthesis that the salesman/messenger whose salary is hardly meagre is the director's nephew.¹¹

How the system of privilege operates and reproduces itself elsewhere would also be reliant in the context of the project. In this process the gaining of the recognised educational qualifications, as well as the resources which make it possible, and an insertion into a network of contacts, all interrelate and play a circular role. It goes without saying that in Nepal the gaining of higher educational qualifications is to a large extent dependent on economic resources for the highly regarded primary schools are private and costly and senior educational institutions are fee-paying. This is not to imply that personal ability isn't relevant for it is. But without opportunity to learn the required educational skill (one of which is English), skills more easily obtained in the fee-paying schools one can't readily enter this arena of eligibility for more prestigious and lucrative occupations. So the picture is one where economic resources make for the possibility of gaining educational qualifications with potential. And becoming educated also exposes individuals to like members who so forming a network of contacts as well as constituting the educated pool of potential candidates for the privileged jobs. Education itself is only part of the route to high office. It is then necessary to have some connexion with those of influence. It could be an old college mate or a friend of the family (often of the same caste) or whatever but some connexion seems to be relevant for getting considered as a candidate and finally selected as the candidate. Once a person enters the arena of such privileges and contacts certain repercussions follow from this. And this brings us to the second feature. Not only do these people become exposed to the extra opportunities but they also have the variety of required assets to locate the next generation in the same circuit. And as a result privilege can remain with the same categories of people. The others outside cannot get in so readily - nor can their children. And so the differentials between the wealthy educated women and the others are retained and are perpetuated with the next generation.

What this also means is that at this comparatively new site the conditions for the operation and reproduction of privilege (economic assets, the expertise in what is the required knowledge, access to the contact with "source-force", *pahauch*), are not unusual. In fact, very familiar. But then so are the job values.

Concluding Remarks

The significant sociological point in our consideration is that job values are being constructed according to some prior code. Either those based on that of western capitalism or those of traditional Nepali bureaucracy or both. There are no signs, at least in our view, that there has been any attempt to create a new vocabulary that would scramble the old vocabulary. To be sure the project could be lauded for providing a new kind of enterprise with new opportunities. But currently in Kathmandu there are many other new sites (there tourist facilities of varying kinds, as well as government employment) which offer jobs that weren't at hand thirty years ago. And it is the project which advocates that it is offering something different or special. Yet it's fair to ask, has it? Perhaps the workers' remuneration is considerably better than in private industry and the project does offer some initial training. But beyond that or after that the producers are expected to produce and the manual workers to work and not diverge from these expectations. The possibility of participating in the decision making process is not entertained as a possibility this being the arena of the administrators. Just the same requirements as there are in private industry or in government service. Furthermore to a large extent these women have no identity or identifiability other than as cogs in the wheels of production (capitalistic values). While the skills are publicized the presence and import of the skilled is less visible.

What we may also find is a kind of appropriation of the products by the senior personnel a practice lingering from bureaucratic mores. For example when there is some celebratory event and the items are exhibited for outsiders' inspection it is usually not the women who have been involved in the production or any one selected by them as their representative who is up front. Generally it is one or other of the senior persons depending on how important the outside observers are. If they are top-brass officials with potential funding powers, the project's spokes-person could very well come from the N.W.O; if of lesser significance then it's usually some member of the project's senior staff. But as far as the workers are concerned, they are rendered more or less "faceless" though all eyes are turned to look at what they have fashioned. What this means in effect is that there has been no revamping of old values but a remaining within the confines of the usual definitions that those in control are responsible and praiseworthy.

If there is not much of radical difference between what happens at the project's site and what happens elsewhere, the project's implementation contains no innovations which could characterize it as a women's project. It is a project where some women may work but that does not make it a project

of women. As to the possible innovations what these might be is not for us to say. Yet it is expected of us since the craft producers and workers presumed that our study provided them with an opportunity to voice some of their particular grievances.

On this score two issues were of paramount importance. And both entailed the producers and workers' exclusion from having some say in the decisions which directly affected them. One was the matter of the policy which meant non-participation in the Provident Fund;¹² the other is the severe penalty for arriving late at work, grievances that the reader probably recalls were mentioned earlier. It goes without saying that there may be others, Nonetheless these were the two of utmost importance. Further, since the women chose to articulate their problems in this manner, this indicates the absence of a body where they could take matters of dispute. It also indicates the women's awareness of what is happening elsewhere on Kathmandu work front and their alacrity to have a say about their conditions when the opportunity occurs. And so it raises the possibility that it is in this area that policy might be able to introduce changes in accord with these women's perceptions and values.

Notes

1. Where a person performed two or more functions and therefore appears in more than one of the four possible categories, then we chose to place that person in the category which best reflects the function that person performs most of the time. There were altogether eight (8) such cases.
2. For an account of this mode of appointment in the past and its implications, see Kondos (1984).
3. For details concerning each of the 47 members of the project, see Chart at end of this paper.
4. One at Lazimpat, two at Pulchok.
5. It has been reported that one past member of the project and no longer employed is still waiting for her salary that should have been paid a couple of years ago.
6. Itself in the middle "Matwali" category of the old Nepali scheme (see Sharma, 1977).
7. One was recently jilted. If she is to find a husband she will require a handsome dowry to compensate the stigma attached to having been jilted. Another woman is separated from her husband.

8. There is some talk that in the past two women from this category joined the project but soon left. We have been unable to corroborate the story.
9. The state prevaricates on this score for on the one hand it bans discriminatory caste practices yet on the other hand perpetuates them in prohibiting the Untouchables' entry into the temples of the high gods like that of Pashupatinath.
10. There is a substantial literature on the topic approached from the angle of patronage. For a recent study of the issues see A. Kondos, 1987.
11. And caused a lot of discussion in the work rooms.
12. This is a kind of superannuation scheme.

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PROFILE OF MEMBERS OF WOMEN'S DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Caste	Sex	Age	Marital Status	Education	Function	Period with project	Mode and amount of remuneration
Producers							
Newar	F	20s	Single	S.L.C. (& continuing)	Fashion dress maker	2 yrs	S. Rs. 480/month Bus Rs. 45.
Bramin	F	20s	Single	S.L.C.	Crochet & sewing	3 mths	D.W. Rs. 15
Chetri	F	20s	Single	S.L.C.	Crochet & sewing	3 mths	(No. Sat. & H) D.W. Rs. 15
Newar	F	40s	Single	No formal education	Asst. Supervisor	5 yrs	(No Sat. & H) S. Rs. 705
Rai	F	20s	Single	Graduate	Asst. Supervisor	3 mths	S. Rs. 800
Newar	F	late 40s	Married	Class 9	Sewing (Cushion & others)	4 yrs	P.R. Sat. & H. Rs. 16
Newar	F	late 40s	Married	No formal education	Sewing (Cushion & other)	5 yrs	P.R. Sat. & H. Rs. 16
Newar	F	late 20s	Single	No formal education	Sewing (Cushion & other)	3 yrs	P.R. Sat. & H. Rs. 16
Chetri	F	early 20s	Single	S.L.C. (& continuing)	Sewing (Cushion & other)	1 yr (1 mth)	H. Rs. 16 P.R. only
Newar	F	early 30s	Married	Class 9	Sewing (Cushion & other)	1 yr	P.R. only
Newar	F	45	Separated	No formal	Sewing (Cushion & other)	1 yr	P.R. only
Newar	F	late teens	Single	Class 4	Sewing (Cushion & other)	1 yr	P.R. only
Brahmin	F	late teens	Single	Class 6	Sewing (Cushion & other)	1 yr	P.R. only
Newar	F	19	Single	Class 6	Sewing (Cushion & other)	1 yr	P.R. only
Brahmin	F	early 20	Single	Class 6	Sewing (Cushion & other)	4 yrs	P.R. + Sat. & H. Rs. 16
Newar	F	early 20	Single	No formal education	Sewing (Cushion & other)	1 yr	P.R. only
Newar	F	late 20s	Widow	Class 9	Sewing (Cushion & other)	1 yr	P.R. only
Rai	F	late 20s	Married	No formal education	Sewing (Cushion & other)	1 yr 6 mths	D.W. Rs. 15 (No. Sat. & H.)
Newar	F	Late 40s	Married	No formal education	Doll-making	3 yrs	S. Rs. 480
Newar	F	50s	Married	No formal education	Doll-making	5 yrs	S. Rs. 480
Tamang	F	20s	Widow	Class (10 & continuing)	Doll-making	2 mths	D.W. Rs. 15 (No. Sat. & H)
Newar	F	late teens	Single	No formal education	Doll-making	4 mths	D.W. Rs. 15 (No Sat. & H)
Newar	F	20s	Single	No formal education	Block printing	5 yrs	P.R. + Sat. & H. Rs. 16
Newar	F	20s	Married	No formal education	Block printing	4 yrs	P.R. + Sat. & H. Rs. 16
Newar	F	20s	Married	No formal education	Block printing	5 yrs	P.R. + Sat. & H. Rs. 16
Newar	F	20s	Single	No formal education	Block printing	1 yr	P.R. only

Caste	Sex	Age	Marital Status	Education	Function	Period with project	Mode and amount of remuneration
Newar	F	20s	Single	No formal education	Block printing	1 yr	P.R. only
Newar	F	20s	Single	No formal education	Block printing	1 yr	P.R. only
Newar	M	50s	Married	No formal education	Print master	6 yrs	S. Rs. 800
Chetri	F	30s	Married	No formal education	Iron section, Trainee in Printing	3 mths	D.W. (No Sat & H)
Newar	F	30s	Married	No formal education	Weaving rugs	5 yrs	P.R. + Sat. & H. Rs. 16
Newar	F	40s	Married	No formal education	place mats	5 yrs	P.R. + Sat. & H. Rs. 16
Brahmin	F	late 30s	Separated	No formal education	Weaving	6 mths	D.W. Rs. 15 (No Sat. & H)
Brahmin	F	40s	Married	No formal education	Ironing	2 mths	D.W. Rs. 15 (No Sat. & H)
Chetri	M	20s	Unmarried	Class 10 (& continuing)	Lab Boy	4 yrs	S. Rs. 550
Newar	M	30s	Married	Class 9	Washing	10 yrs	S. Rs. 467
Chetri	M	20s	Single	S.L.C. (continuing studies)	Salesman & Messenger	1 mth	S. Rs. 600
ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF							
Chetri	F	40s	Married	MS Home Science	Director	1 yr	S. Rs. 2,000
Chetri (Rana)	F	late 30s	Married	BA. Textile design, Int. Dec.	Deputy Director /Designer	2 yrs 6 mths	S. Rs. 2,500
Newar	M	late 30s	Married	B.Com.	Account/Secretary	7 yrs	S. Rs. 1,600
British	F	late 50s	Married	H.S.C Self taught in design	V.S.O.	1mth	Rs. 1,200
EXTRAS							
Rai	M	25	Married	No formal education	Caretaker morning & night	6-7 yrs	S. Rs. 400
Newar	M	19	Married	No formal education	Canteen business	2 weeks	gets equipment & free rent provides food & charges for lunch
PULCHOK							
Newar	F	late 50s	Widow	No formal education	Senior Supervisor	11 yrs	S. Rs. 825
Brahmin	M	25-30	Unmarried	S.L.C (& continuing)	Salesman & Recorder of stock	7-8 mths	S. Rs. 800
Chetri	M	19	Unmarried	Class 9	Peon	2 yrs	S. Rs. 450
Newar	F	late 30s	Married	S.L.C.	Trainer	5 yrs	S. Rs. 700-800
Brahmin	F	late 30s	Married	S.L.C.	Salesperson (ex-Trainer)	2 yrs	S. Rs. 850

Abbreviations:

F = Female

M = Male

S.L.C. = School Leaving Certificate

B.A = Bachelor of Arts

BSc = Bachelor in Home Science

B.Com = Bachelor of Commerce

H.S.C. = High School Certificate

MS = Master in Nutrition

DW = Daily Wage

PR = Piece rate

S = Salary

H = Public Holiday

Sat = Saturday

Int. Dec. = Interior Decorator

RESEARCH NOTE

केही नेपाली वाद्य समूह (बाजा)

- रामशरण दर्नाल

नेपाली सङ्गीत वाद्यमा प्राचीनकालदेखि अनेकौं बाजा (वाद्य समूह) बज्दै आएका छन्। नेपाली सङ्गीतमा 'बाजा' भन्नाले केवल वाद्य यन्त्रलाई मात्र जनाउँदैन अपितु विविध किसिमका वाद्य समूहहरूलाई पनि जनाउँदछ। उदाहरणका लागि 'धिमे बाजा' लाई लिउँ। धिमे बाजा भन्नाले तालबाजा धिमेलाई मात्र नजनाई त्यससँग बज्ने अरू बाजालाई पनि जनाएको हुन्छ। तर, त्यस समूहको मुख्य बाजा चाहिँ धिमे नै हुन्छ। यसको नामैबाट उक्त बाजालाई प्रमुखता दिएको थाहा हुन्छ।

यस किसिमको वाद्य समूहलाई अंग्रेजीमा 'ब्याण्ड' (Band) भनिएको छ। यस्ता ब्याण्डहरू विभिन्न थरिका हुने गर्छन्। नेपालीमा त्यस्ता वाद्य समूह वा टोलीहरूलाई बाजा भन्ने गरिएको हो। नेपाली सङ्गीतमा अनेकौं प्रकारका बाजा (वाद्य समूह) हरू रहेका छन्। त्यस्ता बाजालाई काठमाडौं उपत्यकामा खलः (परिवार) पनि भन्ने गरिन्छ। धिमे वादक टोलीलाई 'धिमे खलः' भनिएको छ। यस बाहेक दापः बजाउने समूहलाई 'दाप खलः' र बाँसुरी तथा बयः वादक समूहलाई 'बाँसुरी खलः' भनिन्छ। काठमाडौं उपत्यकामा त्यस्ता खलःहरू प्रशस्त रहेका छन्।

नेपाली सङ्गीत र सांस्कृतिक दृष्टिले नेपाली बाजा (वाद्य समूह) हरूलाई चार खण्डमा छुट्याई विश्लेषण गर्न सकिन्छ- १. हिमाल खण्ड, २. पहाड खण्ड, ३. उपत्यका खण्ड र ४. तराइ खण्ड। हिमालखण्डदेखि लिएर तराई खण्डसम्म नेपाली सङ्गीतवाद्यमा धेरै थरिका बाजा (वाद्य समूह) नेपाली सङ्गीतमा बज्दै आएका छन्। (दर्नाल २०३८-२०४)

हिमाल खण्डका बाजा

हिमाल खण्डमा बज्दै आएका बाजामा लावाबाजा, द्याङ्गो बाजा, डम्फु बाजा र दुङ्मा बाजालाई लिन सकिन्छ।

लावा बाजा	- २ देखि ४ सम्म (सानो र ठूलो)
काङ्गलिङ	- १ देखि २ सम्म
सङ्ख	- २ देखि ४ सम्म

हिलबु	- १ देखि २ सम्म
च्योत	- २ देखि ४ सम्म
ग्यालिङ्	- २ देखि ४ सम्म
झाह	- २ देखि ४ सम्म
ध्याबुक	- १ देखि ४ जोरसम्म

दयाङ्गो बाजा	
दयाङ्गो	- २ देखि ८ सम्म (सानो र ठूलो)
घण्टी	- २ देखि ८ सम्म
घंगला	- २ देखि ८ सम्म

हम्फु बाजा	
हम्फु	- ४ देखि १२ सम्म

दुङ्मा बाजा	
दुङ्मा	- ४ देखि ८ सम्म

हिमाली खण्डका उपर्युक्त बाजा (वाद्य समूह) हरू लोक गीतदेखि लिएर जीवनका अनेकौं संस्कारहरूमा बज्दै आएका छन्। मेलापात, चाह-पर्व र जात्रा-यात्रादेखि लिएर, कर्मकाण्ड र धार्मिक समारोहहरूमा समेत ती बाजाहरू निरन्तर बज्दैआएका छन्। जन्मदेखि मृत्युपर्यन्त जन-जीवनमा ती बाजाहरूले आफ्नो स्थान ओगटि सकेका छन्। केवल खुशियाली र उत्सवमा मात्र हैन, दुःख र पीडा अनि विरह-व्यथामा समेत ती बाजाले साथ दिदै आएका छन्। दयाङ्गोको मधुर बोलीमा रोगीले केही न केही त्राण पाउँदोस्नेला र उसको गर्जनमा भूत-प्रेत टाढा-टाढा भागेको अनुभूति बिरामी परेको रोगीलाई हुँदो छ।

पहाड खण्डका बाजा

पहाड खण्डका विविध प्रकारका बाजालाई निम्नबमोजिम तरिकाले संयोजित गर्न सकिन्छ।

पन्ध्रे बाजा	
सहने	- १
ढोलकी	- १
भयाली	- १ जोर
दमाहा	- १
दयाम्को	- १

नौमती बाजा	
सहने	- २
ढोलकी	- १

भयाली	- १ जोर
दमाछा	- २
दयाम्को	- १
नरसिंगा	- १
कर्णाल	- १

छत्तीस बाजा

सम्भवतः विभिन्न किसिमका ३६ थरि बाजा (वाद्य समूह) लाई ३६ बाजा भनिएको हुन सक्छ। (थापा २०२९:)

छत्तीस नगरा

साना ठूला गरि विभिन्न आकार-प्रकारका ३६ वटा नगरा एक साथ बादन हुने भएकोले ३६ नगरा नामाकरण भएको हुनुपर्छ। (नेपाल २०४१: २६८)

हुड्को बाजा

हुड्को - २ देखि १० सम्म

मसक बाजा

मसक - २ देखि ४ सम्म
मादल - १ देखि २ सम्म
मुजुरा - १ जोरदेखि २ जोरसम्म

आरबाजो

आरबाजो - २ देखि ६ सम्म
मादल - १ देखि २ सम्म

सारङ्गी बाजा

सारङ्गी - २ देखि १० सम्म
मादल - २ देखि ४ सम्म
मुजुरा - १ जोरदेखि २ जोरसम्म

मादल

मादल - ४ देखि १६ सम्म
मुजुरा - ४ देखि ६ सम्म

खैजडी

खैजडी - ४ देखि १२ सम्म
मुजुरा - २ जोरदेखि ४ जोरसम्म

च्याबुङ्

च्याबुङ्

भ्याम्टा

- ४ देखि १० सम्म

- २ जोरदेखि ४ जोरसम्म

पन्चे बाजा र नौमती बाजा पहाडतिर दमाईले बजाउने गरेकाले ती बाजालाई 'दमै बाजा' पनि भन्ने गरिएको छ। पन्चे बाजा र नौमती बाजा नेपालको सबै भागमा सगुनी बाजाको रूपमा कुनै पनि मंगल कार्यमा बज्ने गरेको पाइन्छ। हरेक खुशियाली र उत्सव अनि पूजा-आजामा ती बाजाहरू बज्ने गरेका छन्।

छत्तीस नगरा र छत्तीस बाजा सुदूर र मध्यपश्चिमाञ्चल तथा पश्चिमाञ्चल नेपालको गण्डकी प्रदेशतिर चलेका वाद्य समूह हुन्। सुदूरपश्चिमाञ्चल र मध्यपश्चिमाञ्चलमा छत्तीस नगरा अझै पनि विशेष पर्व र समारोहमा बज्दै छन्। तर छत्तीस बाजा (छत्तीस प्रकारका वाद्य समूह) गण्डकी प्रदेशमा मात्र हैन अन्यत्र पनि कतै बजेको सुन्न पाइएको छैन। छत्तीसबाजा नेपाली सङ्गीतको सबभन्दा विशाल वाद्य समूह हुनसक्थ्यो। आजकल यसको नाम घाटुगीत र नाचको प्रसंगमा मात्र लिइएको थाहा पाइन्छ। छत्तीस बाजा एक प्रकारले नेपाली सङ्गीतबाट लोप भइसकेको रहेछ। त्यसको एक चौथाइ वाद्य समूह भएको 'नव बाजा' वा नौबाजा काठमाडौं उपत्यकाको ललितपुर र भक्तपुरमा गाइजात्रा (सापारू)को अवसरमा सुन्न पाइन्छ। त्यसवेला घाटुमा छत्तीस बाजाको उल्लेख हुनु स्वयंमा एउटा जिज्ञासाको विषय बन्न पुग्छ। आजको नेपाली सङ्गीतमा शास्त्रीय, लोक, परम्परागत र आधुनिक बाजाहरू मिलाएर ३६ किसिमका वाद्य समूह (बाजा) जुटाउन त सकिएला परन्तु लोक बाजाहरूमा मात्र त्यति संख्यामा बाजा निर्माण गर्नु अलि गाह्रै पर्न जाने हुन्छ।

हुङ्को बाजा र मसक बाजा सुदूरपश्चिमाञ्चल र मध्य पश्चिमाञ्चलमा ज्यादै लोकप्रिय बाजा हुन्। त्यहाँ हुङ्केले लोकगाथादेखि लिएर वीर गाथाहरू सुमधुर आवाजमा हुङ्कोले ताल दिदै गाएको सुन्न सकिन्छ। बादिहरूले मसकमा सुमधुर गीत गाई मादलको तालमा नाचेर लोकलाई मनोरञ्जन प्रदान गरिरहेछन्।

आरबाजो र सारङ्गी गाइनेका पुर्ख्यौली तारबाजा हुन्। सारङ्गी भन्दा पुरानो आरबाजो हो। गाइनेले आरबाजो बजाउन छाडी सके जस्तो अनुभव हुनथालेको छ। कतै-कतै मात्र आरबाजो बजाएको सुन्न सकिन्छ। गाइनेका कर्खा र लोक गीतमा ती दुवै बाजा लोकप्रिय भएका छन्। सारङ्गी त नेपाली सङ्गीतको पर्याय नै बन्न पुगेको छ। (दर्नाल २०४१: १८)

मादल र खैजडी नेपाली सङ्गीतको लोकप्रिय ताल बाजा हुन्। मादल मुख्य ताल बाजाकै रूपमा प्रसिद्ध भइसकेको छ। खैजडी पनि ताल बाजाको रूपमा लोकप्रिय छ। मादलको अभावमा खैजडी नै बज्ने गर्छ।

पूर्वाञ्चल नेपालको लोकप्रिय तालबाजा च्याबुङ् हो। किरात सङ्गीतमा यो ज्यादै लोकप्रिय र प्रसिद्ध रहेको छ। च्याबुङ् गीत र नाचसँगै नाच्दछ। चण्डीनाच, धान नाच र अरू लोकगीत र

लोकनाचमा तालबाजाको रूपमा ध्याबुङ्गै प्रयोग हुने गर्दछ। यसको साथमा भ्याम्टाले संगत गरेको हुन्छ। (ने.रा.प्र.प्र. २०३४: ७)

उपत्यका खण्डका बाजाहरूलाई यस प्रकार संयोजित गर्न सकिन्छ।

पञ्चताल वा देवबाजा

खि	- १
क्वता:	- १
ता:	- १ जोर
पौगा	- १
पैता	- १

पञ्चबाजा वा जोगीबाजा

मुहली	- २
बभुचा	- १ जोर
ढोलक	- १
नगरा	- १

गुला बाजा

घा	- ४ देखि १२ सम्म
मुहली	- २ देखि ४ सम्म
बभुचा	- १ जोरदेखि २ जोरसम्म

नायखि बाजा

नायखि	- २ देखि ४ सम्म (बढी पनि हुन सक्ने)
छुस्या	- १ जोरदेखि २ जोरसम्म

धिमे बाजा

धिमे	- ४ देखि १२ सम्म (बढी पनि हुन सक्ने)
भुस्या	- १ जोरदेखि ४ जोरसम्म
कैपुचा	- १ देखि २ सम्म
तिनिमुनि	- १ देखि २ सम्म

नेकुबाजा

नेकुबाजा	- ४ देखि १२ सम्म
दमखि	- २ देखि ६ सम्म
टिगिलचा	- ४ देखि १६ सम्म

सि बाजा

काहः	- २ देखि ४ सम्म
नायखिं	- २ देखि ४ सम्म
छुस्या	- १ जोरदेखि २ जोरसम्म

नव बाजा

ललितपुर र भक्तपुरमा प्रचलित नौ प्रकारका विविध बाजा (वाद्य समूह)

बाँसुरी खलः

बाँसुरी	- ६ देखि १६ सम्म
बयः	- ४ देखि १२ सम्म
खिं	- २ देखि ४ सम्म
कोचाखिं	- २ देखि ६ सम्म
बभुचा	- १ देखि २ सम्म
तिन्धु	- २ देखि ४ सम्म

दाप खलः

दाप खिं	- ४ देखि १२ सम्म
ताः	- २ देखि ४ सम्म
तिन्धु	- २ देखि ४ सम्म

गुरुज्यूको पल्टनको बाजा

बाँसुरी	- ६ देखि १२ सम्म
इन्द्रढोल	- १
ताशा	- १
भ्याली	- १ जोर

काठमाडौं उपत्यकामा प्राचीनकालदेखि वर्तमानसम्म पनि अनेकौं प्रकारका परम्परागत बाजा र लोक बाजाहरू विभिन्न धार्मिक पर्व र चाड-बाडमा बज्दै आएका छन्। ती वाद्य समूहहरू आज पनि लोकप्रिय रही आएका छन्। धार्मिक भावना र गुठी परम्पराले गर्दा ती अझसम्म पनि संरक्षित देखिन्छन्। धार्मिक पर्व र मेलाका पंचताल (देवबाजा) बाजा, धाः बाजा (गुलाबाजा), नेकु बाजा, नवबाजा, दापः, बाँसुरी, नायखिं बाजा, धिमे बाजा र गुरुज्यूको पल्टनको बाजा बजेका सुनिन्छन्। ती वाद्यहरू लोक सङ्गीत र लोकपर्वहरूमा पनि बज्दै आएका छन्। धरतीमा स्वर्गका देवतालाई आवाहनका साथै मृत्युपछिको शव यात्रामा पनि यहाँ वाद्य ध्वनि नै ध्वनित हुने गर्दछ। शव-यात्रामा बज्ने बाजालाई सिबाजा वा उल्टाबाजा भनिन्छ।

यहाँको सबै चाडबाड, जात्रा-मात्रा र मेला-पर्वमा ती बाजा बज्दै अगाडि बढ्दै गरेका विभिन्न थरिका बाजाहरू (वाद्य समूह) देख्न सकिन्छ, सुन्न सकिन्छ र आफ्नो मौलिक संगीतको

अनुभव गर्न सकिन्छ। चाड-पर्व र जात्रा-मात्रामा सबभन्दा पहिले बाँसुरीहरूको ब्याण्ड गुरूज्यूको पल्टनको बाजा अघि लाग्छ। यो वाद्य समूह (बाजा) अघि लागेपछि मात्र जात्रा वा मेला प्रारम्भ भएको मानिन्छ। स्वयम्भूको गुला मेला र दशैंको नवरात्रि मेला तथा अन्य राष्ट्रिय पर्वहरूमा यस्ता परंपरागत वाद्य समूहहरू आ-आफ्ना टोलीकासाथ बाजाहरू बजाउँदै बडो रौसिया तालले अघि बढेको देख्न सकिन्छ। लोकलाई मनोरञ्जन दिलाउनमा ती बाजाहरूको ठूलो भूमिका रहेको हुन्छ। दर्शकहरू बाजाका तालमा त्यसै त्यसै रमाएर नाच्न थाल्दछन्।

यसरी काठमाडौं उपत्यकाले प्राचीनकालदेखि आफ्ना विविध वाद्य समूहहरूद्वारा सबैलाई मनोरञ्जन प्रदान गर्दै आएको छ। 'टुन्टुन्को छ्याँइ पापा' को बोलसँगै ताइनाइको मधुर तालसँगै लहराएको ध्वजले दर्शकलाई रमाइलो वातावरण तयार परिरहेका हुन्छन्। चचह ... को आवाहनसँगै 'टुनछ्याँ' को एकोहोरो र टिट्लाग्दो धुनले देवतालाई घरतीमा अवतरणको आवाहन र यस लोकमा मात्र हैन, परलोकमा समेत सङ्गीतमय जीवनको कामना गर्ने नेपाली सङ्गीतजगत् धन्य छ। नेपाली सङ्गीत कलाको निरन्तरता धन्य छ। अनि धन्य छ त्यो नादब्रम्ह जसले विश्व ब्रम्हाण्डलाई नै सङ्गीतले आनन्दित तुल्याइरहेको छ। (दर्नाल २०४५: ३६)

नेपालको तराइ खण्डमा प्रचलित केही बाजा यस प्रकार छन्-

ढोल

ढोल	- २ देखि ८ सम्म
फाँफ	- २ जोरदेखि ४ जोरसम्म

ढोलक

ढोलक .	- १ देखि २ सम्म
मजीरा (मन्जरी)	- १ जोरदेखि २ जोरसम्म
पिपरी	- २ देखि ४ सम्म

बीन बाजा

बीन	- १ देखि ४ सम्म
(पुंगी) ढोलक	- १

ताशा:

ताशा:	- २ देखि ६ सम्म
ढोल	- २ देखि ४ सम्म

हफ

हफ	- २ देखि ८ सम्म
ढोलक	- २ देखि ४ सम्म
मजीरा	- २ जोरदेखि ४ जोरसम्म

मदारी बाजा

डमरु	- १	
ढोलक	- १	तीन मध्ये कुनै एक मात्र पनि हुने
ढोल	- १	

डोम वा चमार बाजा

सिंगा	- २ देखि ४ सम्म
हिम्की	- २ देखि ४ सम्म
नगरा	- १ जोर
ढोलक	- १
फिल्लिम	- १
फर्की	- १

शहनाई बाजा

शहनाई	- २ देखि ४ सम्म
नगरा	- १ जोर।

तराई खण्डका उपर्युक्त वाद्य समूह (बाजा) बाहेक अरू किसिमका बाजा पनि प्रचलित हुन सक्छन्। यहाँ त्यस क्षेत्रमा लोकप्रिय केही बाजाहरूका नाम मात्र लिइएका छन्। ती बाजाहरू तराइका विभिन्न भेकमा ज्यादै लोकप्रिय रहेका छन्। ढोल, ढोलक, डफ, ताशा, बीन आदि प्रसिद्ध बाजा हुन्। यसरी नै मजीरा (मन्जीरा), पिपरी, एकतारा रावणहत्था, फाँफ, सिंगा, हिम्की पनि त्यहाँ निकै प्रचलित बाजा हुन्। ढोलक, ढोल र डफ त्यहाँको लोक सङ्गीतको ढुकढुकी भने पनि हुन्छ। कारण तिनका ताल बिना त्यहाँको वातावरण नै खल्लो हुन्छ।

चटकी मदारीहरूले चटक गर्दा डमरु, ढोल वा ढोलक बजाएर रमिता गर्छन् भने सपेराले बीन (पुंगी) बजाएर सर्पहरूलाई नचाउँछन्। तराइमा पेशागत बाजा बनाउनेहरू प्रायः डोम वा चमार हुने गर्छन्। हुन त ब्याण्डबाजा बजाउनेहरू धेरै जसो दमाईहरू पनि नभएका हैनन्, तर उपर्युक्त लोक बाजाहरूमा चाहिँ उनीहरूकै अधिकार रहेको थाहा हुन्छ। नेपाली मुसलमानहरू मोहर्रममा ठूलो उत्सव मनाउँछन् यसवेला उनीहरू संगीतको आनन्दको लागि ताशाः नामक प्राचीन तालबाजा बजाउने गर्छन्। मुगलकालदेखि प्रचलित यो तालबाजा नेपाली संगीतमा अझै पनि बज्दै आएको छ। घाँटीमा झुण्डाएर दुई स-साना गजाले बजाइने ताशाः कुसलवादकहरूले विभिन्न किसिमका बोलहरू भिकि श्रोताहरूलाई मुग्ध पार्दछन्। नेपालगञ्जमा मोहर्रम ज्यादै रमाइलोसँग मनाइन्छ। (दर्नाल ०४३: १)

मङ्गलवाद्यको रूपमा यहाँ शहनाई प्रसिद्ध रहेको छ। विवाह र पूजा-आजाको शुभ-साइतमा शहनाईकै मधुर धून फैलिएको हुन्छ। तर आजकल तराइतिर पनि ब्याण्ड बाजाकै बढी बोलवाला देखिनथालेको अनुभव गरिँदछ। शहनाईको सुमधुर धून कम हुन थालेको छ।

प्रस्तुत लेखमा प्रत्येक बाजा वा वाद्ययन्त्रको विवरण नदिइ केवल ती बाजा, वाद्य समूहहरूको जानकारी मात्र संक्षेपमा प्रस्तुत गर्ने जमर्को गरिएको छ। आफूलाई थाहा भए जति बाजा (वाद्य समूह) वा व्याण्डको परिचयदिने प्रयास हुँदा-हुँदै पनि लेखमा उल्लेख भएका बाजाहरू बाहेक अरू पनि वाद्य समूह नेपाली संगीत वाद्यमा चलेका हुन सक्छन्। त्यस्ता वाद्य समूहलाई पत्ता लगाइ खोज र अनुसन्धान गर्नु पर्ने भएकोले यहाँ केही बाजाहरूलाई मात्र चिनाउने जमर्को भएको छ।

नेपाली संगीत वाद्यका एक-एक बाजा (वाद्य समूह)को आ-आफ्नै सांगीतिक-सांस्कृतिक मूल्य र मान्यता रहि आएको छ। यिनीहरूको आफ्नै ऐतिहासिक पृष्ठभूमि समेत रहेको छ। यस्तो गहन सांगीतिक विषयमा गहिरिएर चिन्तन-मनन र अध्ययन अनुसन्धान नगरी त्यसै व्याख्या गर्न सकिँदैन। मोटामोटी रूपमा यहाँ केवल नेपाली संगीत वाद्यमा प्रचलित केही बाजा (वाद्य समूह)हरूको परिचयसम्म दिन खोजिएको हो। प्रस्तुत परिचयले पनि नेपाली संगीतकला प्रति अभिरूचिराख्ने संगीत प्रेमीहरूको जिज्ञासालाई केही मात्रामा भए पनि सहयोग पुऱ्याउने नै छ भन्ने आशा राख्न सकिन्छ।

प्राचीनकालदेखि नै नेपाली संगीतवाद्यमा विभिन्न सम्प्रदाय र जातिले आ-आफ्नो धर्म, संस्कृति र परम्परा अनुसार विविध प्रकारका वाद्य यन्त्रहरू बजाउँदै आएका छन्। यिनमा कतिपय बाजा जाति विशेषले बजाउने गरेका छन् भने कतिपय बाजाले जीविकोपार्जनमा समेत टेवा दिइ आएका छन्। २००७ सालको क्रान्तिपछि कुनै पनि बाजा जात वा सम्प्रदाय विशेषमा मात्र सीमित रहेनन्। तैपनि सांस्कृतिक मान्यता अनुरूप मंगलसूचक सगुनी जातलाई समाजले आज पनि सम्मानसाथ अघि लगाएको प्रत्यक्ष देख्न सकिन्छ। हुन त यहाँ शाक्यदेखि लिएर वादीसम्मका आ-आफ्ना बाजा नरहेका हैनन्। तर, खास पर्व र दिवसहरूमा तिनीहरूको आफ्नै महत्व र विशेषता रहेको अनुभव गर्नसकिन्छ। तैपनि ती मध्ये कतिपय जातिका लागि यो जीविकोपार्जनका लागि पेशा नै बन्न पुगेको तथ्यलाई पनि नकार्न सकिँदैन। धार्मिक, सामाजिक, परम्परागत र लोक वाद्यसमूहका रूपमा मात्र हैन, अपितु पेशाको रूपमा पनि नेपाली वाद्य र वाद्य समूह (बाजा) नेपाली संगीतमा बज्दै आएका छन्।

नेपाली संगीतवाद्यमा प्राचीनकालदेखि अहिलेसम्ममा कतिपय बाजा (वाद्यसमूह) लोप पनि भइसके होलान्। कतिपय बाजालाई हामीले बिर्सिसकेका पनि होला। ती मध्ये कतिले त आफ्नो रूप-रंग पनि फेरिसके होलान्। कतिले विकासको मार्ग पहिल्याउने जमर्को पनि गर्दै होलान्। तर, ती मध्ये धेरै जसो बाजाहरू आजपनि हाम्रो सङ्गीतमा बजिरहेका छन्। सांस्कृतिक भर्त्सकीहरूमा र राष्ट्रिय पर्वहरूमा तिनको प्रत्यक्ष फलक देख्न सकिन्छ। नेपाली समाजले आफ्नो मौलिक सांगीतिक सम्पदातिर अभिरूचि राख्दै विकासको मार्गमा पनि पाइला बढाउन सकेमा नेपाली संगीतले देशलाई संगीतमय बनाउन सक्ने कुरामा कुनै सन्देह रहँदैन। नेपाली संगीतकला तर्फ संगीतप्रेमीहरूको ध्यान अझ बढी आकृष्ट भइदिए यस कलामा अझ ज्यादा उत्साह र प्रेरणा मिल्न गई महत्वपूर्ण कार्य संपन्न हुन सक्ने थिए।

यस्तो विविधताले भरिएका नेपाली बाजा (वाद्य समूह) हरूलाई परिष्कार र परिमार्जित पाउँदै वैज्ञानिक तरिकाले विकास गर्दै माया-ममता साथ आफ्नो सांगीतिक विकासको बाटोमा डोऱ्याउनु

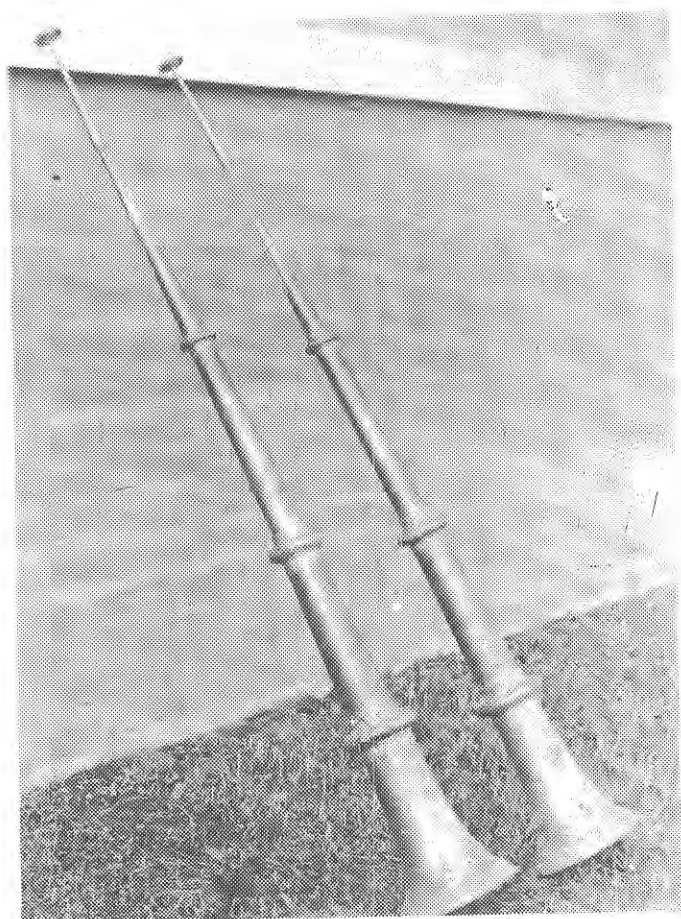
आज हामी सबैको एउटा परम कर्तव्य नै हुन आएको छ। युग सुहाउँदो नेपाली संगीत सिर्जना गर्नमा समेत होस्टेमा हैस गर्नु पर्ने वेला आएको छ। परम्परागत कला र लोक कलाकारहरूलाई प्रेरणा र प्रोत्साहन मात्र हैन सम्मान पनि गर्नु परेको छ। नेपाली बाद्य समूहका यस्ता बाजाहरूले योग्यतासाथ सफलता प्राप्त गर्न सकेमा त्यो नेपाली संगीत कै उन्नति र प्रगति हुनेछ। यसैले नेपाली आमालाई अब बढी मधुरतम संगीतमय बनाउन हामी सबैले आ-आफ्नो योगदान जुटाउन कम्मर कस्नु पर्ने वेला आइसकेको अनुभव हुन्छ।

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| २. दर्नाल, रामशरण | २०३८ संक्षिप्त-परिक्रमा | काठमाडौं, साभा प्रकाशन |
| ३. दर्नाल, रामशरण | २०४१ 'आरबाजो' नेपाली संस्कृति | काठमाडौं
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| ५. दर्नाल, रामशरण | २०४५ नेपाली संगीत-संस्कृति | काठमाडौं, नेपाल राजकीय प्र.प्र. |
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| ७. नेपाल, पूर्ण प्रकाश | २०४१ भेरी लोक साहित्य | काठमाडौं, नेपाल राजकीय प्र.प्र. |
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चित्र सूची

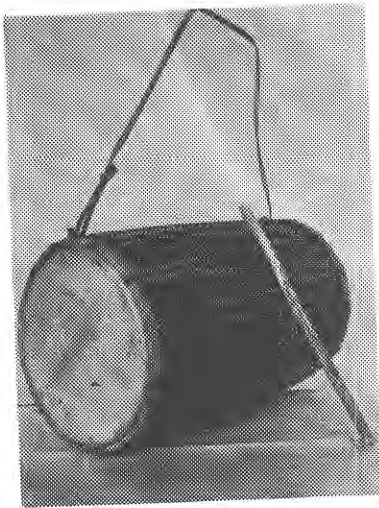
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| १. लावा बाजा (डोङ्छै) | २. सहने |
| ३. ढोलकी | ४. भयाली |
| ५. नरसिंगा | ६. कर्णल |
| ७. हुङ्को | ८. आरबाजो |
| ९. सारङ्गी | १०. मादल |
| ११. च्याबुङ | १२. गुजराती मुहली |
| १३. ललितपुरको नाखिं र हुस्या | १४. धिमे |
| १५. नेकुबाजा र मुली, ललितपुर | १६. दमखिं वारन, ललितपुर |
| १७. भक्तपुरको खिं र बाँसुरी बाजा | १८. तिन्छु |
| १९. गुरुज्यूको पल्टनको व्याण्ड | २०. ढोल |
| २१. डफ | २२. मुजुरा |
| २३. टुङ्ना | २४. दयाङ्ग्रो |
| २५. खोकनाको परम्परागत समूहवान्य (बाजा) | |



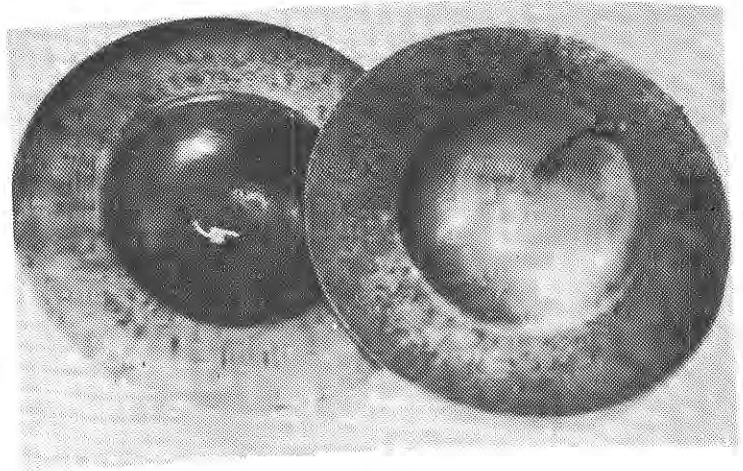
१. लावा बाजा (डोइछै)

२. सहने

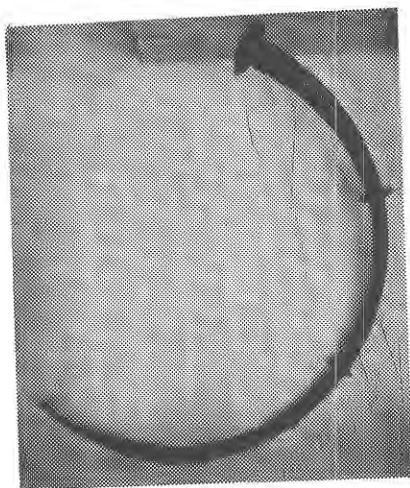




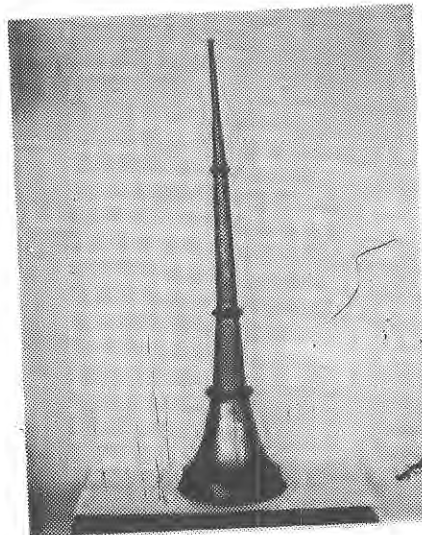
३. ढोलकी



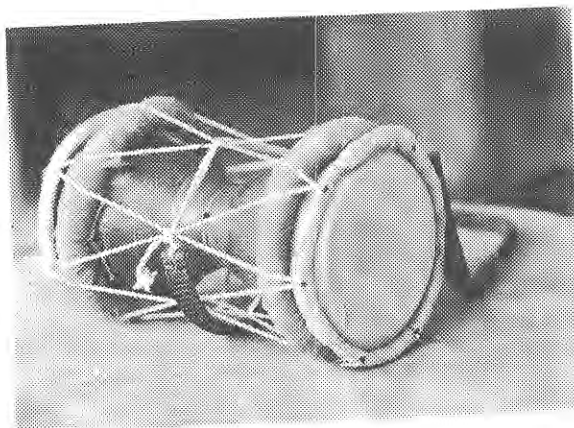
४. भ्याली



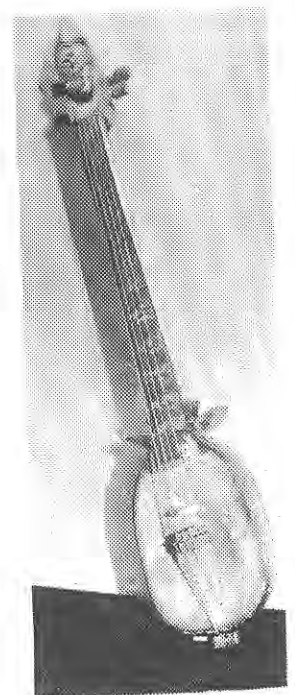
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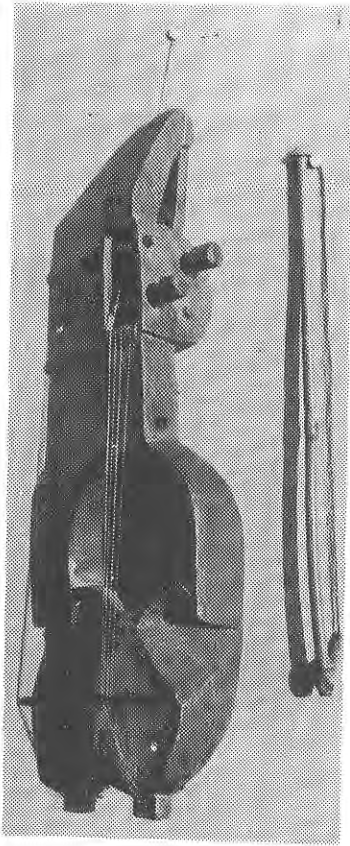
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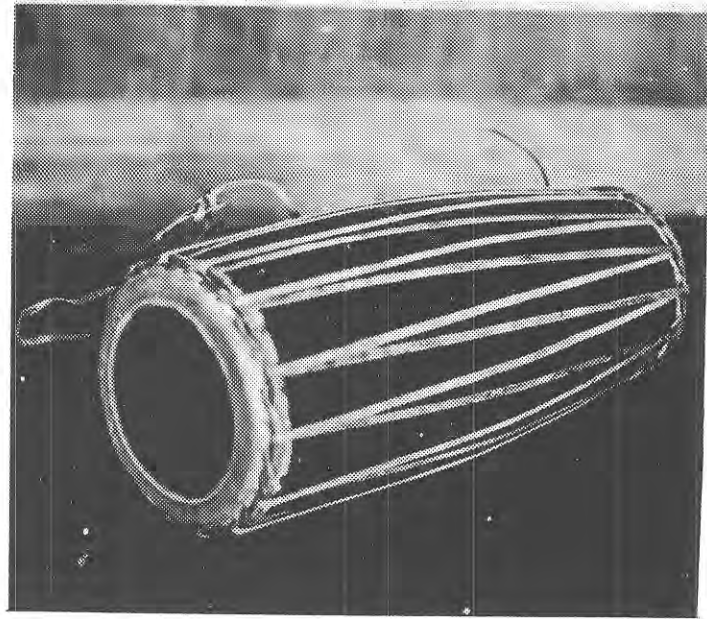
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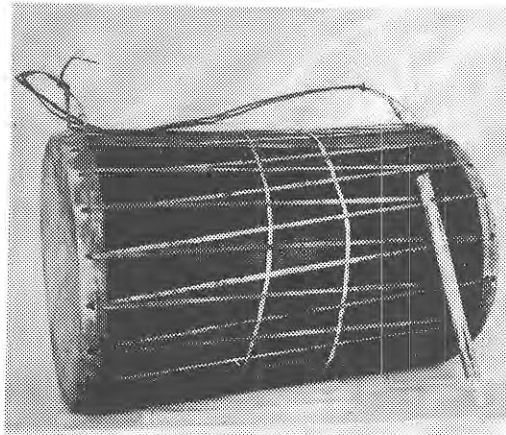
८. अरबाजो



९. सारङ्गी



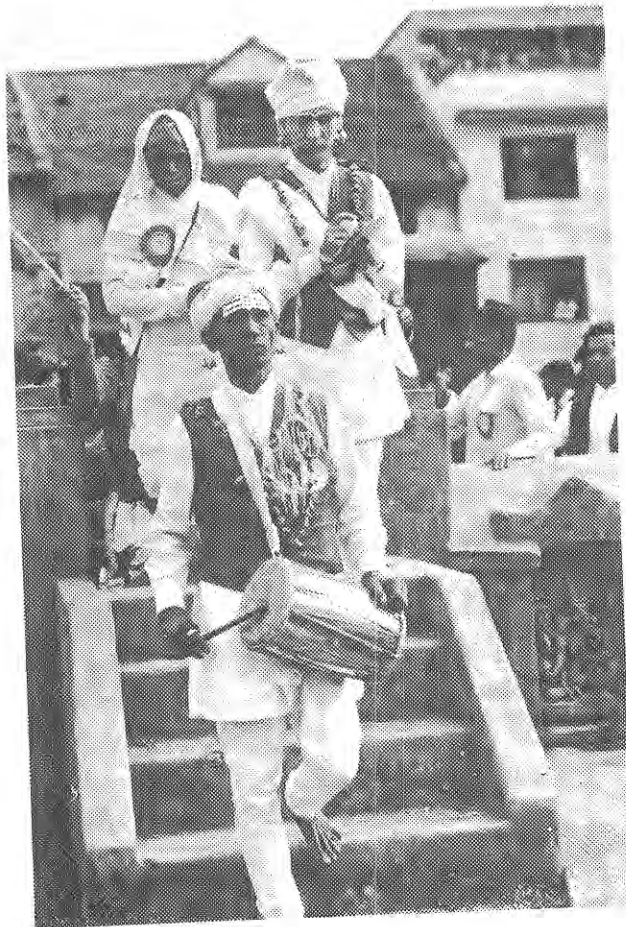
१०. मादल



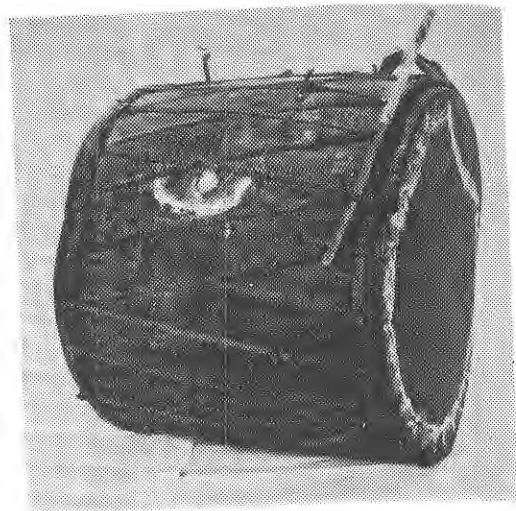
११. च्याबुक



१२. गुजराती मुहली



१३. ललितपुरको नाखिं र हुस्या



१४. धिमे



१५. नेकुबाजा र मुली, ललितपुर



१६. दमखिं वारन, ललितपुर



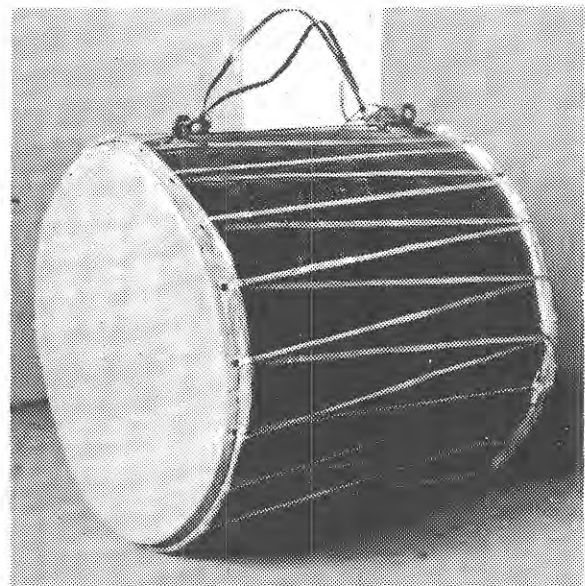
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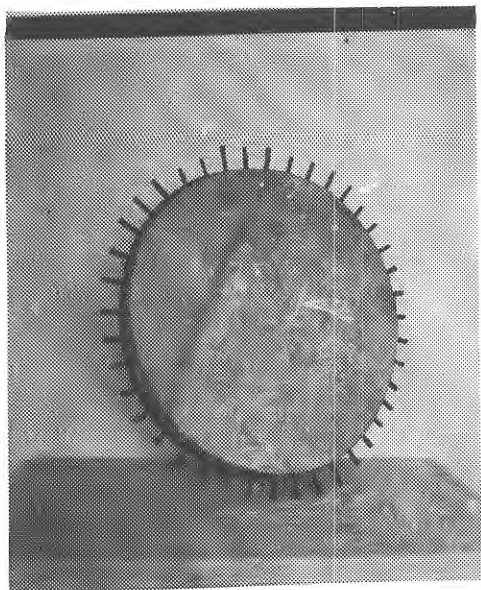
१८. तिन्धु



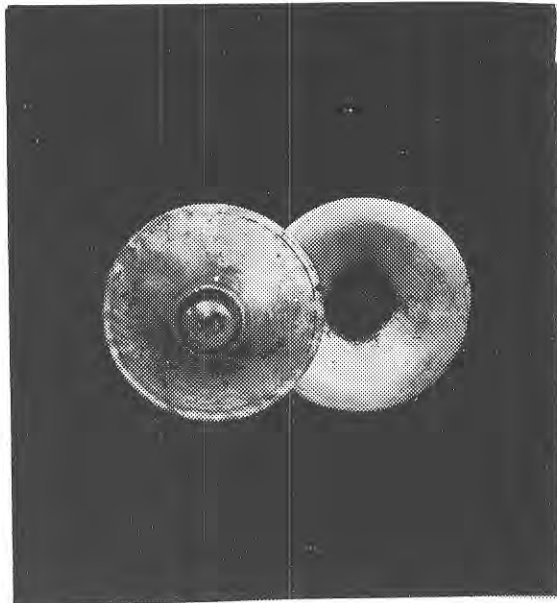
१९. गुरुज्यूको पल्टनको ब्याण्ड



२०. ढोल



२१. डफ



२२. मुजुरा



२३. टुङ्ना



२४. दयाङ्गो



२५. खोकनाको परम्परागत समूहवाद्य (बाजा)

RESEARCH NOTE

THE OVEREXPLOITATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES IN GORKHA: SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CAUSES

Ulrike Müller-Böker

Destruction of forest and erosion, problems of water balance and even natural catastrophes: all these are consequences of the excessive exploitation of natural resources. The relation between socio-economic structure and its resulting pressure upon ecosystems will be analyzed as one aspect of ecological-geographical investigations (cp. HAFFNER, 1986 and POHLE, 1986) taking Gorkha as an example.

The population of Gorkha is made up of various ethnic groups. The Newar dominate the bazaar and the Chetri, the Bahun and the Jogi the surrounding rural areas. Several "impure" Nepalese castes are present besides the Magar. If one value the settlements according to the ecological advantages of their location, one can see that the typical site of a Newar settlement is the topographically favorable flat area, where there is a good supply of drinking water. Khet land (irrigated rice land) lies only a short distance away. On the other hand, the majority of the Chetri live on steep slopes of bari land (upland fields), where there is only an inadequate supply of drinking water. Khet land can only be reached by way of long, steep paths. The settlements of the Sarki, the Damai and the Jogi are located on the steep slopes below the palace where condition are bad as regards relief, soil and drinking water. As far as the Jogi are concerned, the choice of this location for their settlement was probably influenced by its proximity to the Gorkhnath temple, whereas it is typical for the situation of the "impure" castes to be driven to occupy such peripheral locations.

The majority of Gorkha's inhabitants is economically dependent upon agriculture. The number of full-time farmers is quite small. Many households, whose farms are too small to support a steadily increasing number of members, are dependent upon a second source of income, i.e. farming that is carried out along with another occupation, usually with the aid of day labourers. In particular, members of the "impure" castes and even a few Magar and Shrestha find a part-time occupation as jyami-porters, farm or building workers. Often the Sarki work the land for others as tenants but without tenant status. Families who engage, to a large extent, in trade seldom farm their lands themselves. They have all the work done by labourers. This group of very wealthy people, usually Srestha, determines business life in Gorkha. Those who are completely without any land are mainly the Kami and the Damai.

In the Gorkha region, one can assume the average size of a property to be about 20 ropani (ca. 1 ha). However, at least 25 ropani are necessary to support an average family when the soil is of good quality. This means that the average farm is still under the minimum size needed for subsistence. The properties of the households investigated in Gorkha ranged from 3 to 96 ropani. We can see that the land is not evenly distributed, as there is no shortage of land, in particular amongst tradesmen and the higher castes, whereas impure castes not only have little, but also poor quality land.

According to some estimates, c. 80% of the inhabitants of the Gorkha region do not have enough land to be able to supply their families with basic foodstuffs all year round. The shortage of land obliges the farmers to employ an extremely intensive form of agricultural exploitation. They manage to achieve astoundingly high yields on poor soil using crop rotation systems which produce two to three harvests per year. However, the negative effects of such intensive land use can already be seen today. The fertility of the soil is steadily decreasing, because the periods are too short when fields are allowed to lie fallow. The application of mineral fertilizer can only improve this situation to a certain extent, owing to the poor exchange capacity of the soil. Fields are laid out in areas which are ecologically unsuitable: a practice which brings little profit and is ecologically unjustifiable. It is quite wrong to assume that the growing population can be fed in future by taking measures to intensify farming or by extending cultivation areas. Nowadays, one can already see the trend for many young people to turn to other employment or even to emigrate.

In the Gorkha land register we find *raikar* and *guthi* land, i.e. owners

of fields are either private persons or registered as *guthi*. There is a remarkable amount of *guthi* land in Gorkha; the tenants are mostly Jogi and Bahun and some are Shrestha. Many *guthi* tenants have their land farmed for them by labourers on a crop sharing basis. If the *guthi* receives no services from the *guthi* tenants, for example as *pujari*, it claims a share of the harvest. According to the land register data, all owners of *raikar* land farm their fields themselves. No tenants are mentioned. However, in fact, between 20% and 30% of the fields are not cultivated by the owners themselves but by labourers. Although these labourers work the land quite independently just like tenants, they do not enjoy the rights of a tenant. It is customary for the landlord to claim half of the total harvest, whereas according to the law, a registered tenant need only forfeit half of his main harvest. Unlike the tenant, the field worker may be dispossessed by the owner at any time and it is indeed a fact that the owners often replace labourers so as to avoid the possibility of their becoming eligible for a legal claim to a part of the land. This evasion of the tenancy laws not only keeps the field workers themselves in an extremely precarious economic situation but also has a negative effect upon agricultural productivity. Labourers have neither capital nor security to invest time and energy in measures to increase farming intensity, as he is not entirely economically dependent upon agriculture. Thus, it could be observed that well irrigated fields were only in use once a year for a rice crop, whereas upland fields of marginal soil in ecologically unfavourable locations were intensively worked, because they belonged to the farmers themselves. It would be desirable, both from an economic and an ecological point of view, to recognize the labourers' tenancy status as set out in the Nepalese agrarian law.

A common practice is to employ day labourers during the planting and harvest seasons. Families with a few members capable of work or those where certain members already have a steady job usually have the majority of the work done by day labourers. In contrast to the situation of the farm workers, the management of the farm lies in the hands of the owners. It is not always profitable to have day labourers do the work in the fields, as wages are too high in comparison to yield. Thus, some owners of land prefer more extensive use of the land, for example by harvesting only one crop per year. There are even cases of land being left to lie fallow in a region, where there is an acute shortage of land.

When one examines the cadastral maps, one is immediately struck by the conglomeration of small allotments into which the land is divided up. Thus, there is not only little land available for farms, but what there does

exist is dispersed over wide areas - as a result of the normal procedure for sharing out the fields among the sons. If one categorizes the owners and guthi tenants of the fields according to castes, it becomes clear that members of impure castes have hardly any land of their own. If one draws parallels between the land quality of a certain plot and the caste of its owner, one can see that the Newar have mostly khet land, whereas the Magar have only few irritable allotments in spite of the proximity of their villages. On the contrary, they have very small plots of the extensive bari land. The few fields of the Damai, The Sarki and the Kami are also situated in the ecologically unfavourable areas. The tendency of the Newars towards the irrigated wet rice cultivation well-known in other regions of Nepal can also be observed in Gorkha. The large number of fodder trees growing in the upland areas on the Chetri land is striking. They guarantee not only a supply of firewood and fodder for the animal, but also stabilize the hanging terraces. These examples illustrate the fact that in Gorkha, too. One can observe variations in cultivation methods and in reactions to environmental threats, which are specific to certain ethnic groups. If one compares the cadastral maps to a map of erosion damage, another aspect of possessory right with ecological consequences becomes very clear: the worst damage is to be found in areas which do not belong to private persons but which are entered in the land register as communal land. One explanation for this is that non-arable land usually remains the property of the state. However, one can often observe, under identical ecological conditions, intact fields situated next to extremely degraded pasture land which has been damaged by erosion. The former is *raikar* land, the latter communal land.

The keeping of livestock plays a very important role for Gorkha's farms. The production of dung is of key importance although on most farms the amount produced is not sufficient for all the fields. Female water buffaloes and cows are kept for milk; the male buffaloes and goats provide meat. Whereas the water buffaloes and sometimes the other bulls too are kept and fed all year round in stalls except when they are taken to drink or to bath, and the cows and goats are left to find fodder for themselves. They graze along the roadside, the paths, near the rivers and in the forest. Pasture land as such hardly exists and what there is, is often very degraded and thus not very productive. The keeping and feeding of livestock in stalls, coupled with the use of fallow fields as pasture (a form of livestock farming which is ecologically suited to this area), often proves to be impossible, because the supply of fodder for the animals constitutes a problem. R.C.U.P. and the veterinary authorities in the area are together attempting to simultaneously reduce the number of livestock and increase the productivity of the animals.

However, fewer animals also produce less dung and mineral fertilizers cannot completely replace natural dung in the soils which are mostly poor in humus. Another aspect is that the sale of goats, which are absolutely unpretentious animals, is often the only source of ready cash for the poorer families. It is planned that the intensification measures should include the setting up of an artificial insemination station. New, improved animal populations should in all probability prevail in Gorkha during the course of the next few years. It will, however, prove more difficult to bring about an improvement in the fodder situation. The productivity of pasture areas could indeed be increased by, for example, sowing of nutritious types of grass and introducing a grazing rotation system. However, besides the organizational problems involved, there are nowhere near enough areas available. A further possibility is the increased cultivation of fodder trees and sparing usage of the forest as pasture land. It would seem that besides the solution of the energy and firewood problem, finding an answer to the question of overgrazing is a particularly pressing task for ecologically-orientated agrarian planning.

In Gorkha, all the firewood must be collected from the forests of the surrounding area which are by no means large. As there is not nearly enough dead wood available to fulfill the demand, healthy trees are also illegally chopped down. The majority of the inhabitants of the area regard the provision of a firewood supply as extremely problematic. It is a long way to the forest and there is always a chance of being caught by a ranger. On the other hand, people do realize that cutting down the forests will result in more erosion. An important task for the future for both the forestry authorities and the village development committee will be to increase the productivity of the forest by means of specific measures. The forest should not merely be protected, but opened up to many different kinds of usage as defined by the term "social forestry", so as to secure the cooperation of the local inhabitants.

The mountain population of Nepal has developed a type of farming adapted to its surroundings, based on a comprehensive knowledge of the natural environment. Nowadays, it is, however, becoming more and more obvious, that the relationship between man and his environment is disturbed. What used to be the responsibility of the individual to protect his natural environment and to secure his own existence by means of adapted land use is nowadays being increasingly delegated to institutions. To put it somewhat polemically, protection measures are only then regarded in a positive light by the local population if they are not implemented in their own village or, as in the case of the damming of rivers, they bring no restrictions with them.

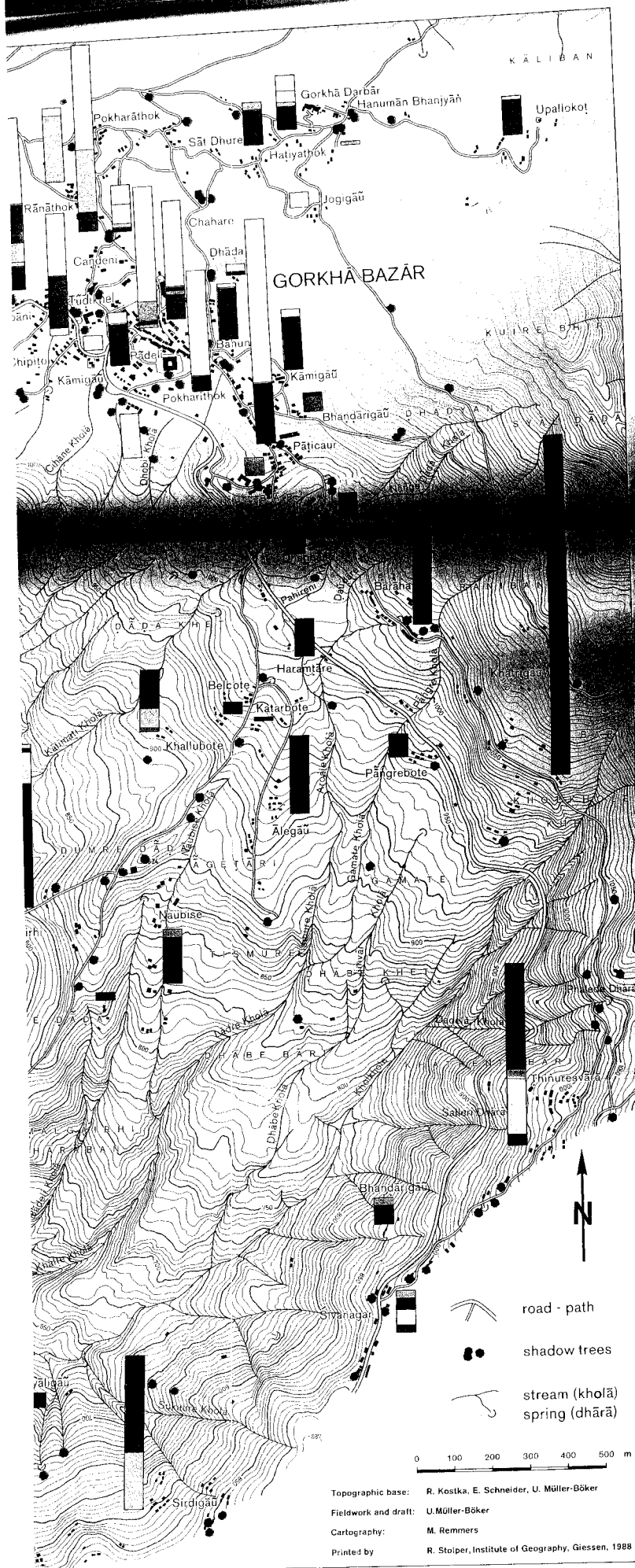
Most people are of the opinion that the government is not able to work particularly efficiently. On the other hand, absolute miracles are expected from both the state and from development projects, onto which the responsibility for environmental protection has been thrust all too easily. Some of the people I talked to pointed out quite rightly that measures to prevent erosion can only be carried out successfully if the local inhabitants can again be brought to accept responsibility for their own surroundings. The fact that agriculture in the Gorkha region is so productive proves that its inhabitants must be well aware of the processes in their natural environment. A traditional understanding of the environment is also expressed in the language: the names of settlements and terrains in the region reflect both the economic dependency of the predominantly farming population on the natural environment and also a thorough knowledge of it.

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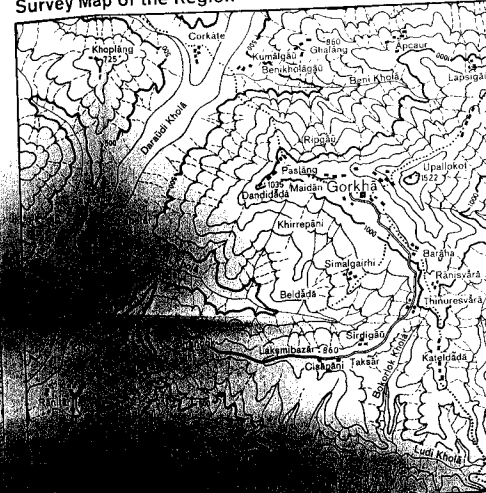
GORKHĀ - SIRDĪ KHOLĀ

Ethnic Groups and Castes



Survey Map of the Region

1 : 100 000



number of
households

Ethnic Groups and Castes

- Śreṣṭha
- Śākya
- Bāhun
- Chetri
- Jogi
- Sārki
- Damāi
- Kāmi
- Gāine
- Kasāi
- Magar
- Guruṅ

BOOK REVIEW

Heartbeat of Nepal: The Pancai Baja. 1990. Carol Tingey. 239 pages. Kathmandu: Royal Nepal Academy. Price Rs. 150.00/U.S.\$ 10.00.

Pancai Baja, an ensemble of wind instruments, drums and cymbals played by the Damais represents a paradox inherent in the caste ridden Nepalese society. This ensemble is played by the Damais for the higher caste people, but they themselves remain at a lower stratum in the hierarchy of the caste system. The higher caste people need the band for the sacred ceremonies but the Damais are not considered 'auspicious' enough to enter the house of the Brahmins, Chetris and other castes. The Damais who play the band for the *rites de passage*, weddings, plantation ceremonies and for various other religious and social occasions, remain on the fringe of the main social stream - an irony of the paradox.

The paradox represented by the *pancai baja* shows the ambivalent attitude of the Nepalese society towards music, singing and dancing. For instance, the Gaines occupy the same social position as the Damais in so far as they too are placed at the lower rung in the hierarchical ladder, and the higher caste people do not drink water touched by them. The Gaines themselves represent the paradox. Though they sing the ballads, the annals of the dynasties and the tragic and hilarious occasions that occur in the life of the community, they too remain on the fringe. The Gaines are exclusively a singing class and their solo instrument is the fiddle called *sarangi*. However, unlike a Damai player, a Gaine singer can project his individuality through his voice quality, histrionics and virtuosity. *Sarangi*, the individual musical instrument of the troubadour, may be said to represent the singer's personality.

Unlike the *sarangi*, *pancai baja* represents a social agreement. It is not only an ensemble of the various musical instruments, but is also a

structural model of the tacit agreement between the recipients and the performers that can be noticed in the various impacts of the individual instruments. The *sahanai*, for instance, is valued for its melodious quality and for capturing the haunting beauty of the occasion by varying its tunes in various contexts. The Damai player has a repertoire from which he selects the right melody for the right context. For example the melody produced at the time of the bride being sent away by her parents captures the sad and a rather mixed mood of her folks and of the bride herself. This versatile wind instrument is also played as a solo instrument in contexts which would otherwise require the *pancai baja* ensemble.

Each of the *pancai baja* in fact, has its individuality, a semiotic value that is not lost even when the ensemble is played in unison. A particular instrument is foregrounded by a certain form of conventional agreement. The long wind instrument *narasinga*, for instance, is played for fanfare, and also to herald the coming of a particular occasion marking a change in the structure of the ceremony. The *pancai baja* thus, represents vertically a semiotic structure with its own pattern, and tradition-symbolic value of the instrument, its melodies and rhythms, and horizontally, a dynamic structure allowing changes in the choice, adaptation and rejection of the ensemble along the socio-cultural axis.

Carol Tingey's study covers both dimensions of the *pancai baja*. She traces the history, conventions and the modality of the *pancai baja* structuralism, and studies the conventions, the socio-cultural value and use of the band, the position of the Damais in the society and the indispensability of the ensemble on various social occasions. In the seven sections, she discusses history, the structure of the ensemble itself, the form of the repertoire and the relationship of the ensemble with various cycles and rituals of the Nepalese life. She provides figures, map of the study, the Gorkha district which is an important crossroad from the point of view of the *pancai baja*'s spread and adoption by various groups of people and also examples in musical notations.

This book is an important study of the comparatively neglected but a very important musical subject. Associated with this study is the comprehensive study of the Damais as people, as an ethnic group that forms the main part of the ethno-musical structures of the hill people. Despite a number of variations in the structural pattern of the Damais and their musical role in the various parts of the country, the Gorkha based study of the author does provide a cross-view of the Damai social structure and their musical role

in the society. Certain generalizations, however, are based on her study of the adoption of the *pancai baja*, also pronounced as *pance baja* in the eastern hills, by people of different ethnic groups in the western part of the country. The adoption of the *pancai baja* by the Limbus in *dhan nac*, for example, is one such generalization. The *dhan nac* unlike *ghanto nac* is not accompanied by any musical instrument. It is a purely verbal repartee followed by a choral dance.

This book is a descriptive rather than a specific study of the pattern of the ethno-musical structure. The objective of the study, she says, is "to explore the concept of the 'auspiciousness' of the *pancai baja* and to examine the ways in which its function is being adapted in response to a changing society." (p. 3). This book explores the various modalities of the *pancai baja* performance rather than a certain ethno-musical concept.

Free from the specialist jargons and scholarly complexity this book gives broad based information about the very important musical band. The *pancai baja* ensemble is an open theatre where people perform their community dramas; it is a repertoire which people use for dramatizing their own sentiments; *pancai baja* gives an occasion that people use to realize the hollowness and hypocrisy involved in the caste considerations in human relationships and become one for a certain period of time and this ensemble rightly deserves to be called 'the heartbeat of Nepal.' Carol Tingey who came a little over four years ago as a graduate student of London University looking for the scanty materials on *damai baja*, as she called it then, has produced an authentic description of the subject herself. This is a useful book and a valuable contribution to the study of the important but generally neglected ethno-musical subject of this country.

– Abhi Subedi

BOOK REVIEW

Fatalism and Development, 1991. Dor Bahadur Bista. 187 pages. Calcutta: Orient Longman Limited. Price: I.C. Rs. 150.00

Professor Dor Bahadur Bista is a popular name in the anthropology of Nepal. His first book, *People of Nepal* (1967) has been welcomed by a large number of native and foreign scholars. Bista has multifarious experiences in different fields of life. After many years of administrative and academic career, he suddenly seems to have realised that Nepal is underdeveloped: the root cause of underdevelopment, according to him, is Nepal's social structure which is largely based on hierarchial caste principles and fatalistic values. The high caste Hindus, primarily the Bahuns, who carry out the priestly services are seen as the sole perpetrators of this continuing underdevelopment. These fantastic ideas are put together and the result is a book entitled *Fatalism and Development*.

I am not only an anthropologist by training but also a Bahun by birth. Like Bista, I have also travelled Nepal (though not with Prof. Furer Haimendorf) extensively over the last 17 years and worked closely with him as a colleague at Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies (CNAS). However, Bista does not want to show his affiliation with CNAS where he was awarded the first Professor of Anthropology of Tribhuvan University.

It requires much space to summarize the scattered arguments of the author. So this review touches only on a few salient points. Before doing this, let me briefly outline the contents of the book.

There are altogether seven chapters in the book excluding the "Introduction" and "Conclusion". The introduction is an important chapter and here he has made an effort to define his objectives, methods and to illustrate some key concepts like fatalism, *chakari*, *afnomanche* and

dependency. The objective of the book is "to isolate key factors in Nepali society that are retarding and diminishing its effort to develop" (p. 1). The "culture of fatalism," which is an absolute belief in fate, and "where one has no personal control over one's life circumstances which are determined through a divine or powerful external agency" (p. 4) is the sole determining factor of Nepal's underdevelopment. Bista claims, "This book is based on observations made over thirty years on Nepal's attempt to develop and respond to change" (p. 6). Finally, Bista targets, "the book is centred on the cultural systems of the major groups of the high caste Hindus" (p. 7).

Chapter One provides an overview of the geography and history of Nepal. Put together, they are seen as having kept Nepal economically backward and isolated. In Chapter Two, Bista attempts to provide a history of caste system in the Kathmandu valley, the Gandaki region, the *Khasan*, the Himalayan region and the Tarai. However, the distinctive features of caste as a sociopolitical system which successfully operated over the last 1500 years or so in Nepal have not been carefully delineated. Chapter Three presents the family structure, the pattern of socialization, and the status of women as prevalent among the various ethnic/caste groups. The presentation is an overgeneralized gloss. There is little reference to specific ethnic and cultural groups of Nepal.

The core chapter of the book is "Values and Personality Factors" where he discusses the work ethics, *jagir* and the *chakari* system as prevalent in the Nepali society. If *chakari* does not work, concept of *afnomanche* is built into the argument. The chapters on "Politics and Government" and "Education" provide historical overviews of the governmental structure and the educational system of Nepal. He argues that the structure of Nepali government is strongly influenced by fatalistic attitudes and that this impedes the process of democratisation. The educational system does not increase knowledge and skills of the learners. Sanskrit education is condemned outright (p. 135) as it is argued to be not only nonproductive but also generating fatalistic values among people at large. In general, Bista likens cultural behaviour to economic commodities where everything is calculated in terms of gain and profit. In Chapter Seven, "Foreign Aid and Development," he argues that foreign aid has become nonfunctional because of the prevailing fatalistic values in every developmental activity. To Bista "... seminar is essentially a manipulation and play on words..." (p. 138) or an erudite scholarly version of fatalism. He condemns Western trained scholars as replica of the fatalistic tradition of the Nepali society. The "Conclusion" does not provide a summation of his views but goes on to assemble disjuncted ideas collected from different sources.

I would like to begin by asking, "What is development?" A large section of social science theories are devoted to defining "development", or "theories" are set forth with explanation of the mechanisms of development. Nowhere has Bista attempted to define the term; perhaps he knows its complexity and elasticity. Borrowing an approach developed by Max Weber in his study of Protestant ethics and capitalism, the lack of economic development in Nepal is traced to the sphere of value orientations of a group of people. But Bista should know that it is not only economic development which counts in the development of a society. There are a lot of negative consequences of rapid industrialization or economic growth, e.g., such as uneven distribution of wealth, alienation of people or social institutions, depersonalization of individuals, destruction of family and communal life, degradation of environment etc., which make life more difficult for a large segment of population.

The other important issue is the structure of the Nepali society itself. The Nepali society is the intermingling of various ethnic/caste groups with their different languages and cultures. Within this underlying diversity are the common ideas, symbols, motifs and practices which indicate the coherent Nepalese cultural tradition. This has become possible due to a long historical process of largely peaceful intermingling of these various groups. Bista, however, speaks of an "alien culture" (p. 2) which he believes has become pervasive in Nepali culture today. While Bista never identifies this "alien culture" concretely, the readers, if they are as sly as the author, can certainly recognize the "alien culture" as none other than high caste Hindu culture. If so, Bista is highly inconsistent in his thought and characterization. He himself notes that the Bahuns were already in the Kathmandu valley during the Licchavi period (p. 35), which takes us back to the 6th century A.D. Likewise, he does not consider Newars a homogeneous cultural group of the Kathmandu Valley but rather discrete groups who entered the Valley and became Newars (p. 39). The history and culture of greater Nepal begins only after the unification by King Prithivinarayan Shah in 1768. This gives rise to the following questions: Can culture remain "alien" for more than 1500 years? Can a culture remain "alien" and yet exert pervasive influence and provide the overall direction for a "host culture"? Finally, how validly can "economic development", which is a far more recent historical category, be juxtaposed to this 1500 years old "alien" culture?

Bista seeks to relate underdevelopment to fatalism. He does not develop this key concept very well. I believe that in every religion and culture, fatalism persists; it varies only in degree. Fatalism is an essential

attribute of Christianity (catholicism in particular), Islam and indeed, all major religions. Many societies derive their duties from the command and will of God as prescribed in the book. Within Nepal, I believe that almost all ethnic/caste groups have internalized fatalistic values though the degree of fatalism may be slightly higher among the orthodox Brahmins than the other ethnic groups. Whether it is Shamanism, Buddhism or Hinduism, there is faith in the next world which helps to bind the village community together and also provides directions as to the needs of a person -- physical, moral, social and economical, in a rightful manner. In Nepal, gods and goddesses reside everywhere, on roads, trees, houses, and villages and not only in the heart of the city but also in the most remote areas. Almost every Nepali, whatever his religion is, knows his particular religious text and respects it at least to the degree of not treading on it or doing anything disrespectful to the shrines. Are these not the aspects of fatalism?

Bista is not very precise in the identification of those perpetuating fatalistic values. Sometimes, it is used in the sense of "alien culture" holders, at other times it appears to signify the cultural systems of the major groups of the high caste Hindus (p. 7) which may include Brahmin, Thakuri, Chetri, high caste Hindu Newars, the Tarai Maithil and Jha Brahmins and Rajputs. At times the perpetrators are identified as Bahuns (p. 29). Alternatively, the villains may be only those Bahuns who perform the priestly chores (p. 150). At places, Bahuns of Gandaki (p. 26) and Mechi zones (p. 52) are excluded from having fatalistic attitudes.

The text is full of contradictions. Just to cite a few examples of his idea about caste, Bista writes: "A majority of the Bahun priests are the descendants of caste Brahmins who came mainly from the plains (the Gangetic plains) and some smaller groups from the Deccan during the medieval period" (p. 38). He goes on to write "The river water in Benaras continues to be treated as holier than the clean and fresh water of all Himalaya rivers of Nepal" (p. 39). But on p. 55 he writes, "The caste system of Nepal has always been unique and not copied something from abroad".

On p. 54 there is a subheading "Decreasing significance of caste" wherein he describes how a Limbu has opted to become a *Sudra* in the Hindu caste hierarchical model. Also, he describes how the Rai boys are initiated to become Chhetris. These, to me, are examples of the ascendance of the caste system and not its decreasing significance.

In almost every page of his book, Bista talks about "work" but nowhere does he clarify its meaning. He writes, "To become educated is to be

effectively removed from the work force" (p.6), "High caste educated people never want to work" (p. 81), "Priests cannot work because work is a low caste occupation" (p. 72). "Work", in totality, encompasses almost all activities of human being. Like "making bricks", "weaving carpets", and "ploughing the fields", teaching and researching involve labour and should thus be generally categorised as work. *Notes and Queries on Anthropology*, (1929, 5th edition), noted that man does not work solely to satisfy primary needs -- there are other objects of work besides the securing of food, clothing and shelter. Additionally I can provide a hundred and one examples of Brahmins at manual work, including those who perform the priestly services at the same time. The Bhatta Brahmin at the temple of Gokarneswar Mahadev of Kathmandu (Gokarna) not only performs regular worship of the deity in the morning and evening but also works as an accountant in the Institute of Engineering campus, Pulchowk. This is not an isolated example, such cases are found throughout the Kingdom. In my recent field trip in Sankhuwasabha, East Nepal, I found a Dahal Upadhyaya Brahmin family where the father does the priestly services and the son runs a hotel and sells country liquours openly. Ploughing the field and sewing clothes are the normal activities of Brahmins of the Ilam district. Throughout the Eastern and the Western hill regions of Nepal, many high caste Hindu groups including the Brahmins earn their living by portering.

Sweeping statements are found throughout the book. Below I provide some specific examples.

Example 1

"Families in Nepal tend to be nuclear" (p. 61). Though Bista has done an extensive fieldwork in many parts of Nepal, nowhere has he cited an ethnographic evidence to support his view. Traditionally, Nepali families are largely of the extended type (father, mother, unmarried daughters, son/s and their families) and sometimes joint, except in the few urban areas where families tend to be nuclear. This, however, even does not apply to the many Newar families which generally are extended.

Example 2

"To have a son in the family is necessary among the caste Hindus" (p. 60). However, this is valid not only for caste Hindus but also for non-caste Hindu groups of Nepal. Plenty of demographic literature is available to substantiate this claim.

Example 3

"Very few children are taught to compete or to try and achieve better than their fathers. Fathers symbolise the ultimate in achievement" (p. 69).

This statement is not at all valid in the context of the Nepali society in general and the Bahun-Chhetri in particular. Parents in Nepal want to see their offsprings better off than themselves. Let me cite an example of my own generation in Eastern Nepal. Most of our parents were farmers with little education. They were content with what they produced from their fields. Their world view was limited within the settings of the family, village and the district. Very few were employed outside the home. Now, the people of my generation are not only better educated than their parents, but also their living standards are higher, many of them are employed in white collar jobs and have national and international networks and connections.

Example 4

"The latter (Nepali baby) is only gradually weaned from the mother, who always enjoys a respected position and the love of her children. This is not the case with the high caste male child. He too is suckled by his mother and develops for her the same close attachment as found with any small child. But the mother as a woman is only a second class human being who, in spite of her high caste, is believed to have certain qualities that are also polluting. At an early age the male child is taken away from his mother and is encouraged to redirect his attachment to his father" (p. 73.).

The above view clearly suggests that Bista has a poor understanding of the socialization of children among the high caste Hindu groups of Nepal. Actually, the weaning of a child depends on the closeness of the birth spacing. If the birth spacing is short, the weaning period is also short. In rural Nepal, where the majority of the people live, birth spacing is normally relatively shorter in the poorer and less educated families. The question of lack of affection to the mother and treating her as a second class human being by the sons of the high caste Hindus is not at all logical. Can Bista provide any ethnographic example where he has noticed such a case? The readers would have been much benefitted, had Bista provided examples and more specific details of such cases.

Example 5

"In most areas of Nepal, low caste people are fast improving economically when compared to people belonging to the higher castes" (p. 80).

The author has chosen to treat the topic like economy in terms of a generalized structure. Valid economic generalizations are always based on data and not on gossips.

Example 6

"Charity is not valued under Hinduism." (p. 81). Every Nepali Hindu knows that one of the fundamental tenets of Hinduism is charity. Hindu religious texts provide ample examples where a Hindu has not only offered his wealth but also his body in the name of charity. Saint Dadhichi offered his bones to make a weapon, and king Harischandra gave away his kingdom, wife as well as his son in the name of charity; these are some examples.

Example 7

"Since the population of such high caste people is not large..." (p. 62). "the Bahun-Chhetri then are in a minority" (p. 154).

The above statement implies that Bista does not think seriously enough about terms like "large" and "minority". When an author asserts the population size of a group to be large (or not large), he must cite figures. Likewise, the term "minority" here applies only in relation to other ethnic groups of Nepal. Is Bahun-Chhetri a minority group compared separately to the Rai, the Limbu, the Magar, the Tamang, or the Newar of Nepal? If one carefully analyses the statistics of Nepal (Bista does not believe at all in Nepal's statistics!), the percentage of the high caste people (includes the Brahmin, Thakuri, Chhetri, high caste Newar, and the high caste Hindu Tarai groups) ranges between 40-50% of the total population of Nepal.

Though Bista attempts to provide a materialistic approach to explain the cultural behaviour of the Nepali people, he fails to explain the distinction between class and caste. Rosser's essay (1966) on caste mobility among the Newars of the Kathmandu Valley clearly notes that wherever there are disparities in wealth and political power, there arise systems of stratification, with the symbols of whatever culture context is present (whether Buddhist or Hindu) being used to legitimize and reinforce the resulting hierarchy.

Similarly, the "Chakari" system and "Afnomanche" as depicted by Bista in the book are not unusual social categories in many other parts of the world.

In sum, the book is the product of a false framework of interpretation and only serves to increase the frustration and misunderstanding of the

majority. The book fails to build a basis for scientific generalization. Nowhere is Bista's model able to show cause and effect relationships, i.e. where fatalism prevails development is absent or vice versa. An extensive bibliography of 23 pages is presented without proper references and contexts to the text. The writing style is lucid. I suggest that every educated Nepali read the book.

- Dilli R. Dahal